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THE CHURCH AND MODERN CHURCHMEN.

By THE EDITOR.

THE CHURCH was the subject chosen for the consideration of the fourth Conference of Modern Churchmen held at Girton College, Cambridge, August, 1917. Unfortunately it has been found impossible to publish in this, our Conference Number, all the papers and addresses delivered at the conference, including one on "Christian Art" by our President, Professor Percy Gardner.

While the papers here published will speak for themselves, it may not be amiss to preface them with a concise statement of the modern Churchman's attitude towards the Church, for that attitude is neither understood nor appreciated by many of his fellow-Churchmen.

Modern Churchmen are often charged by their fellow-Churchmen with being bad Churchmen. They are accused of being individualists of the liberal Protestant type. Such a charge is based on an entire misconception. Modern Churchmen are essentially Churchmen; they believe in a Catholic Universal Church, composed of national and local churches. They recognise themselves to be members of that great historic body, the Church of Christ. Moreover, they strive to realise the responsibilities and discharge the duties which such membership entails.

Where modern Churchmen differ from traditional Churchmen, is in their conception of the nature and functions of the Church. They do not, like their traditional brethren, regard the Church as a corporation created by a divine decree and endowed with a definite constitution, inalienable rights, unalterable dogmas, ministries, and sacraments. The Church appears to modern Churchmen to be a creation—a progressive creation—brought into existence by those moral and spiritual forces which centred in and operated through the personality of Jesus Christ. She is the historical development of that little band of disciples who believed Jesus to be the Christ of the Kingdom of God, and modern Churchmen believe that that development, both extensive and intensive, is not yet completed.

Modern Churchmen are aware that our Lord was not primarily concerned with the Church but with the Kingdom. His ministry was the proclamation of the advent of the Kingdom; His Gospel was the Gospel of the Kingdom; His Righteousness was the Righteousness of the Kingdom; His disciples were the Sons of the Kingdom; His prayer, "Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in Heaven." For the modern Churchman the Church

of Christ is obviously not the Kingdom of God. Where God reigns there only is His Kingdom. But although the Church is not the Kingdom, she may be, and ought to be, the most effective instrument in bringing in that Kingdom on earth. Thus for the modern Churchman there is in this matter of Churchmanship, a greater and a lesser loyalty, and at times there is a conflict between these two loyalties. The greater loyalty is loyalty to the Kingdom of God and to Jesus Christ the Messiah of that Kingdom; the lesser loyalty is loyalty to the Church as the chief agent of the Kingdom of God on earth. Hence the modern Churchman can only be loyal to the Church just in so far as he believes the Church to be loyal to the Kingdom. It is here that the modern Churchman differs from the traditional Churchman. The traditional Churchman seems to regard the Church as an end in herself instead of being a means towards an end. He confuses the Church with the Kingdom by identifying the two. Hence he feels it to be a duty to be loyal to the Church, irrespective of whether the Church is or is not loyal to the Kingdom. This attitude to the Church seems to the modern Churchman to be fatal to Church efficiency, and to present serious dangers to moral and spiritual progress. It is the source of ecclesiasticism, that deadliest enemy of the Religion of Christ. The modern Churchman is sure that not until Churchmen are Sons of the Kingdom first, and Churchmen second shall we have the Church what she ought to be. The spirit of the modern Churchman in this matter is, however, no new spirit, it is as old as the spirit of the prophets of Israel.

Modern Churchmen are therefore not indifferent either to the Church or to the duty of Church membership, or to the obligation of holding right views about the Church. On the contrary, they feel that things can never be well with the Church until Churchmen recognise what the Church really is. It is only the recognition of her true nature and function which can make the Church true to herself and to her task. It is her part to be the Organ of the Spirit of Christ, and the Agent of the Kingdom of God. To transmit that Spirit, to advance that Kingdom, is the be-all and end-all of her existence. When once the Church realises this, many difficulties disappear, as for instance in the relationship between Church and State in this land. For the modern Churchman the Church is not sacred, and the State is secular. Church and State are both ministers of God. The Church is not the inferior or superior or rival of the State, both are fellow-workers for the Kingdom of God; and in some departments the State is more effective than the Church, and in others the Church is more effective than the State. Problems of ecclesiastical autocracy or spiritual independence which vex the ecclesiastical mind do not therefore exist for the modern Churchman whose test of Churchmanship is the Kingdom test.

So, too, the Church of England's relationship to other religious communions in this land is immensely simplified by the thought of their common relationship to the Kingdom of God. For the ecclesiastical mind the Church of England is a true branch of the Catholic Church, and the other religious bodies are but schismatical sects, but for the modern Churchman all these bodies are his fellow-servants in advancing the Kingdom of

God. So, too, in the case of all organizations which seek to promote the betterment of English life, whether they be scientific, educational, social, the attitude towards them of the Son of the Kingdom is sympathetic and helpful. He rejoices to see them flourish, he assists them to the best of his powers, he does not want to make them all into Church of England undertakings, he is delighted that they should possess the even nobler privilege of being agencies of the Kingdom of God.

But there is no Protestant individualism in such a doctrine of the Church. On the contrary, it is an intensely social doctrine. Neither does it abolish the need for the Church. The Church remains an essential adjunct of the Christian religion. What the body is to the soul, that the Church is to the Spirit of Christ. The Bride is the organ of the Spirit. Both the Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." They ought to speak with one voice: to act with one impulse. Every moral and spiritual ideal, if it is to influence mankind, must be embodied in an organism and transmit its influence through an organization—a combination of personalities. Of course the danger of an organization is that it can be captured and even perverted to thwart the ideal which brought it into existence. Not seldom has human history shewn mankind the Church of Christ as the opponent of His Spirit and the adversary of the Kingdom of God. It must not be supposed, however, that this has been the Church's dominant aspect in history. There is another side. The Church has been, when at her best, the active agent of the Kingdom; she has been the home of enterprising goodness; she has presented to the world a vision of the beauty of holiness; she has been the mother of saints who have been among the salt of the earth. If at times she has seemed to dehumanize and enfeeble human nature, yet more often has she uplifted and transfigured it.

Modern Churchmen feel that the Church, whether Roman, Greek, or Anglican, needs to realise much more acutely than she is doing the truth of her relationship to the Kingdom. Her present weakness is mainly due to her forgetfulness of it. She has been idolising her orders and her sacraments as though they were her chief treasure instead of the Spirit of Christ which created these things, and can desert them when they are misused. If the Church to-day both in her official utterances and official policy lacks the authentic note of spiritual and moral leadership, it is because of the lie in her soul; it is because she is false to her source and mission; it is because her standard of values is perverted; it is because she is devoted to means and not to ends. Because she is idolizing organizations and ordinances the Spirit of Christ is plainly refusing to work through her or them. Before the Temple of Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus, Josephus asserts that a voice was heard from the shrine saying: "Let us depart hence." That voice is sounding to-day in the ears of many. Churchmen who look to the Church for leadership and enlightened activity are asking: Has the Spirit of Christ forsaken the Church? Is she still the Agent of the Kingdom of God? Or is not God already creating new organs for His Spirit, new agencies to advance His Kingdom in her stead? As they behold the Church in her policy and ambitions the imitator of that political and commercial world which she

affects to despise, and presumes to rebuke, their heart fails them. She is thinking too much of herself, her privileges, her possessions, her finance, her ecclesiastical autocracy, her superiority to the nation which she vainly calls on to repent. Instead of the Gospel of the Kingdom with its sincerity, its simplicity, its righteousness, and love, her official assemblies are offering to Englishmen the subtle compromises of the ecclesiastic, the financial schemes of the bureaucrat, the petty pieties of the Pharisee. But even though these things be clad in New Testament phraseology, those to whom they are offered are not deceived. They recognise that "the real Christian thing" is lacking, and that ministries and sacraments and ordinances are no substitute for it. They doubt whether sacraments which are used to separate Christians from one another can possibly unite those who use them to Christ. The Englishman's test is after all Christ's test: "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Who cares whether a bishop can trace back his episcopal pedigree to apostolic times in comparison with the practical questions: Is the episcopate the most effective form of Church ministry for this age and nation, and is there any Divine law which prohibits an episcopal ministry from co-operating in the bonds of Christian fellowship with other ministries which are non-episcopal?

Who cares whether the Eucharist can only be validly celebrated by an episcopally ordained ministry in comparison with the practical question: Do those who partake of the Eucharist, however celebrated, receive and shew forth in themselves the Spirit of Christ?

Who cares whether Christ founded the Church in comparison with the practical question: Is the Church the supreme agent in advancing the Kingdom of God here and now?

Modern Churchmen feel the pressure of these intensely practical questions, and in consequence many other questions which seem to be so serious to the ecclesiastical mind, and disputes about which divide the ecclesiastical world, appear to modern Churchmen to be trivial in the extreme.

Englishmen are looking to-day for some great policy of social reconciliation and social reconstruction in this land, but are they looking to the Church of England to lead it by first initiating a great policy of religious reconciliation and religious reconstruction? We could wish they were. There are not a few, and many of them earnest English Churchmen, who believe that the leadership in this matter is much more likely to be with the Y.M.C.A. and the Student Christian Movement than with the National Church.

Yet what prevents the Church of England from leading in this enterprise? It is the false view of the nature of the Church and of her relationship to the Kingdom which prevails among the mass of her clergy.

Modern Churchmen feel that their present duty towards the Church is threefold.

First, to destroy those false conceptions of the Church's constitution and claims which cannot be justified either at the bar of history or at the bar of spiritual experience, and which only minister to her pride and conservatism, and limit her usefulness.

Secondly, to induce their fellow-Churchmen to recognise that their supreme loyalty must be loyalty to the Kingdom of God, and that they must insist on the Church of which they are members forgetting herself and her own interests in loyalty to the Kingdom.

Thirdly, to strive for such reforms as the Church needs to make her an efficient servant of God's Kingdom in this age.

If only these three things could be accomplished, many of the problems which beset the English Church at the present time might be easily solved, many of her alienated members might be reconciled, and her weakness transformed into strength. But it is the first step which costs. The curse of the Church is ecclesiasticism or self-love. The salvation of the Church is loyalty to the Kingdom. The things which belong to the Church's peace are not really hid from her eyes, if she would but look at them. They are clearly manifest in the Gospel of Him who wept over the Church which even He could not save. For the Church as for the individual Churchman the secret of true success is found in loyal obedience to Christ's command "Seek ye *first* the Kingdom of God."

THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.*

By the Rev. Canon GLAZEBROOK, D.D., sometime Head-Master of Clifton College.

In a remarkable speech at our last Conference Mr. Gamble reminded us how much of its influence the early Church owed to a frank detachment from the world. The persons described in the Beatitudes, he said:—

"are poor because they do not take the proper way to secure riches. They hunger and thirst, they mourn and are persecuted, because they are not at home in their present surroundings, and because they make many enemies. They are peacemakers because they know that most of the things for which men quarrel are not worth quarrelling about. They are pure because they are unspotted by the world, and they are merciful because they realise their own need of mercy." . . . "If we are to preserve the Christian morality," he continued, "we must find a modern equivalent for this early characteristic." . . . "St. Francis of Assisi found an equivalent for it in his day. The Jansenists found an equivalent for it in their day. But where shall we look for our equivalent?" . . . "The worldliness of the existing Church is one chief reason of its impotence."

* The Opening Address delivered at Girton College, Cambridge, on August 8th, 1917, to the Fourth Conference of Modern Churchmen.

The problem which he stated thus is fundamental, and has a direct relation to nearly all the questions which we are discussing at this Conference. So I think my prologue will be most useful if it is mainly devoted to the relations which have existed, and which ought to exist, between the Church and the world. And by the Church I would be understood to mean what the prayer-book calls "The mystical body of Christ, which is the blessed company of all faithful people." I do not propose to be very systematic, or to maintain a definite thesis; but rather to discuss the question with you and with myself, prepared to follow the argument wherever it may choose to lead us—even into paradox or inconsistency.

"Christians," says an often quoted but anonymous writer of the second century, "are not distinguished by country, by language, or by customs, from other men. They neither inhabit cities of their own, nor use any uncommon mode of speech, nor practise any peculiar mode of life. Their teaching was not discovered by the research of men, and the philosophy they profess is not of men. Though they inhabit Greek and barbarian cities, as their lot is cast, and follow the customs of the country in dress and food and general mode of life, their conduct is admirable and altogether strange to men. They live in countries of their own, but as sojourners. Every foreign country is a fatherland to them, and every fatherland is a foreign country. They are in the flesh, yet live not after the flesh. Their life is spent on earth, but their citizenship is in heaven. They love all men, and are persecuted by all. They are ignored and condemned; put to death—and made alive. They are dishonoured, and in their dishonour glorified. They are reviled,—and bless; outraged—and honour men. Doing good they are punished as evil-doers: when punished they rejoice as being made alive. By the Jews they are warred upon as aliens, and persecuted by the Greeks; and they that hate them cannot tell the reason of their enmity. In a word, what the soul is in a body, this the Christians are in the world. The soul dwelleth in the body, yet it is not of the body; so Christians dwell in the world, yet are not of the world. The flesh hateth the soul and warreth on it, because it is hindered of its pleasures; so the world hateth Christians, because they set themselves against its pleasures. The soul loveth the flesh which hateth it, so Christians love them that hate them. The soul is shut up in the body, yet itself holds the body together; so they are kept in the world as in a prison, yet it is they that hold the world together. The soul, though itself immortal, dwelleth in a mortal tabernacle; so Christians sojourn among corruptible things while they look for the incorruption that is in heaven."¹

¹ Epistle to Diognetus. Quoted from Gwatkin's *Early Church History*.

We need not claim that this is anything more than an ideal picture. Its importance for us consists, not in the exactness of the portrait, but in the fact that it plainly represents the conception which Christians, removed by a generation from the apostles, held of the true nature and function of the church.

Written about a century after Pentecost, the epistle to Diognetus marks a sort of dividing line in the history of the Church, for while it formulates the aspirations of the first century of the church's life, it points on to those of the next age. As Baur remarked long ago, "He who knows himself to be the soul of the world is already prepared to receive the reins of world-premacy in his hands." And in fact the Church, during the third and fourth centuries, proceeded first to claim and then to possess a real domination over the Roman world.

Let us consider two or three aspects of this astonishing process, which seem to throw light upon some problems of our own age.

We must go back for a moment to St. Paul, whose fertile genius planted the seeds of so many future developments. When he claimed that the Christians, as the true children of Abraham, inherited the promises of which Israel proved unworthy, he originated a pair of conceptions whose influence has largely determined the course of European history. One is that of the Catholic Church. In the Old Testament the same word *ecclesia* (congregation) denotes both the whole people and any particular congregation actually assembled for worship, the idea being that any congregation is the local manifestation of the whole worshipping people. The transference of this term to Christian assemblies enabled St. Paul at one moment to speak of the Corinthian Church as the body of Christ, and at another to give the same name to the whole Christendom. So the conception of the Catholic Church dates from the Roman imprisonment.

Not less important is the description of the Christian body as the people of God. The author of the first epistle of St. Peter, a disciple of Paul, expresses the thought more plainly than Paul himself. "Ye," he writes to the scattered Christians of Asia Minor, "are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood,

an holy nation, a peculiar people." He thus claims for the Christians the same kind of national or racial unity which distinguished the Jews—a people scattered over the world, and yet one in nature and sentiment. It was not long before this quasi-political conception of the Church became crystallised in a current phrase—"the third race." The epistle to Diognetus speaks of "this new race;" a little later Clement of Alexandria writes of "the third race;" and the apologist Aristides treats the division of mankind into "the three races" of heathen, Jews, and Christians, as a familiar thought. It was apparently no less familiar to the heathen, for Tertullian describes how the crowds in the circus cry out, "How long shall we endure the third race?" (*Usque quo genus tertium?*)

Of course the two conceptions—"Catholic Church" and "third race"—are intimately connected in history as in origin. They are the spiritual and the social or political aspects of the same organisation. But it is important to emphasise the distinction; for we are apt to forget, looking back on the early history, that such an organisation, though primarily religious, could not but have a serious political significance. That will be made clear if we consider the attitude of the "third race" to the Roman government at different times. It was twofold. As the heir of Israel's privilege, the Church was inclined to regard the State as an enemy. In the Apocalypse, for instance, Rome is identified with Babylon, and her destruction regarded as the Church's triumph. From time to time, when persecutions arose, this feeling of hostility revived; and men wrote as if there could be no reconciliation between the Church and the State. But in quiet times, that is in normal conditions, a different opinion prevailed. St. Paul regarded the Roman government as beneficent, and urged the Christians to render obedience. "The powers that be are ordained of God." Justin Martyr, a century later, in spite of several persecutions, pleaded to the emperor that the Church was his best helper, his natural ally, in maintaining the *pax Romana*. Towards the end of the second century, Melito, bishop of Sardis, protested against the persecution of his time on the ground that between the Church and the Roman Empire there was a natural kinship; since they originated about the same time.

and grew up side by side. Still more remarkable is the argument with which Origen closes his reply to Celsus. He definitely contemplates the conversion of the whole Roman world to Christianity, and describes the moral and military consequences which will follow. So before the middle of the third century the Church, in the person of her most distinguished son, claimed both the philosophy of the Greek and the policy of the Roman for subject allies of the Church.

While he looks forward to a unification which appears natural and inevitable, Origen is careful to justify the "third race" in maintaining an attitude of aloofness. Christians, he says, will pray for the emperor and will benefit their neighbours by influence and example; but they will neither fight in defence of the State nor serve in any of its magistracies. The motives of this abstention were primarily, no doubt, religious; but the effects of it were political. Under an autocracy, indeed, where there is no question of voting, there was probably no way in which a large body of respectable men could make their influence felt so keenly. Whether by design or by coincidence, their inaction was a most effective form of action.

Effective for the purpose of gaining power; but not for the purpose of using it when gained. When Origen's prediction had been largely fulfilled through the politic conversion of Constantine, the Church suddenly acquired immense political power. But the long habit of abstention had paralysed the constructive imagination, and Christians contributed little to the regeneration of society, which was then still possible; and thus the greatest opportunity in all history was thrown away. When the rest of Origen's prophecy was fulfilled by the barbarian invasions, which swept away the remains of heathendom, there perished also the effete bureaucracy which the Church had made no effort to replace by a new social order. So Europe, dismembered by invasions, agonising in a ceaseless conflict between civilised corruption and vigorous barbarism, had to make a new start, with little guidance from the religion which all alike professed.

When all the inhabitants of the known world were nominally Christians, the old antithesis of Church and world lost its meaning. But before long it was revived in a new sense, to

play a notable part on a new stage. A variety of reasons, good and bad, led to the formation of a vast hierarchy of priests and monks, which spread over Europe like a net. Possessed of more learning than the coarse mass of mankind, and having a higher standard of morals, they soon claimed that they were the Church, and ordinary Christians the world. The claim was sustained by the real services which their acknowledged head rendered to all Europe. Brooding over the welter of inchoate kingdoms, which covered the surface of the decaying Empire, the Papacy did much to bring order out of chaos. Gratitude for the spiritual influence which Rome did exert for centuries led mankind to accept the disastrous dichotomy which classed all married men and women as the world, and taught the celibate hierarchy to usurp the position which St. Paul and St. John had claimed for the true Church. In vain did Dante publish his noble dream of an ordered Christian world under the twin rule of Pope and Emperor. Products and symbols of a false conception of the Church, Pope and Emperor were impelled by the conditions of their existence to divide mankind in a ruinous and demoralising strife.

The superiority in culture and conduct which at first belonged to the "churchmen" of various kinds, gradually passed to the laity. When that change was recognised a revolution became inevitable; and the Reformation was largely due to the determination of the laymen to have an active share in the Church life, not to be mere subordinates of the priest. After nearly a thousand years the antithesis "Church and world" had again to change its meaning, at least in Protestant countries. So long as Churches were national, and there was practically no toleration, the old meaning could not be revived, for every citizen was perforce a member of the Church. Gradually a third meaning was evolved. I don't know how or when it originated, but in the eighteenth century it had a considerable vogue. "The Church" was the term now used to designate those members of the national Church who considered themselves to be superior in piety; the world were all the rest, the careless, the vicious, and the intellectual.

The growth of tolerance introduced complications. Each of the larger Christian bodies included a select number who

considered themselves—perhaps in some cases their whole community—to be the Church, while they classed all the other communities as parts of the world, together with the numerous but little recognised citizens who were altogether outside the pale of Christian profession. So when I was a boy such hymns as ‘The Church’s one foundation,’ which were common property, were being sung by different sects in a variety of different senses. If we were to examine closely, I believe we should find that in a less degree the same paradox persists. But it cannot be for long. A new force has come into existence in the last century, which promises to restore the old antithesis of Church and world to its original meaning.

The industrial revolution, which began about the middle of the 18th century, has created and developed a new order of men among our citizens. When manufacturing towns began to grow up rapidly, they were not provided with either education or places of worship. The workers and their families tended to live outside the normal influences of society and religion, not of set purpose, but because no society and no religion claimed them. Suffering many wrongs at the hands of society, they became its enemies, and enemies of the Church, which appeared to be the symbol of the old social order—aristocratic, inelastic, intolerant, and therefore oppressive. Naturally they formed organisations of their own, such as benefit clubs and trades’ unions. They developed a code of morals of their own. They found prophets in enthusiastic young men, who preached a gospel of the rights of man. They evolved new theories of the State—theories often pathetic in their futility, but appealing to the ignorant imagination.

To the best of them the group of ideals, which are collectively called socialism, appeal with the force of a religion. Their systems (if he might use so definite a word) demand and foster many virtues. They admire and practise a charity, a tolerance, a self-sacrifice, which put many Christians to shame. But, far from regarding these virtues as Christian, they hate the Church because they suppose it to be the champion of a pharisaic selfishness.

So there has grown up in England what we might call an anti-Church. Like the early Christian Church it began among

the poor and despised, but has grown in power and numbers. Like the early Church it has its internal dissensions, its rival creeds; but it tends to form a unity for mutual help. And of late, growing in intelligence, it has enlisted, even as the early Church did, a number of philosophers, who have deserted the established creeds. It would not be difficult to point out living parallels to Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and to the cultured disciples of Origen; but I abstain, for fear of being thought libellous. Of these men some are detached from Christian faith without being actively hostile to it, others are enthusiastic enemies of the faith, who believe that the Church stands for an exploded set of ideals, an absolute order of society, which are destined to fall with a crash as the heathen faith and empire fell fourteen hundred years ago. They regard the Church and the existing social order with feelings not unlike those which Origen and Augustine expressed about the heathen Roman Empire; and they look forward to the time when socialism will control the fortunes of England and the world.

One aspect of this movement, which is too often ignored, deserves careful attention. Fifty years ago men used to say that all civilised people were agreed as to the content and the necessity of the moral law, and differed only about the reasons for obeying it. That was never true in any complete sense, for there was always a margin of Christian ethics which was not covered by any other moral system; but it came near enough to the truth to possess a certain plausibility. The movements of the past fifty years have so widened the margin of difference that it can no longer be disregarded, even by careless observers. Large bodies of men and women, more or less organised, now challenge some of the ethical principles which the Church has always treated as fundamental. In the pages of the *Clarion*, or in the report of the Royal Commission on divorce, we find the representatives of feminist opinion openly attacking the institution of marriage, and advocating complete sexual irresponsibility. The institution of private property, again, is anathema to some of the groups of men who are vaguely called socialists. The brotherhood of man is an object of hatred and ridicule to the many conscious and unconscious disciples of Nietzsche, who regard morality as

"the law of the herd," and claim for themselves, as superior beings, complete independence of its authority. And the belief in a future life, the foundation upon which a large part of Christian ethics rests, is endangered alike by the challenge of opponents who attack it, and by that revival of witchcraft by which many of its would-be champions are making it ridiculous.

So the wheel has come full circle. Once more the antithesis between Church and world has nearly the same meaning as in the third century. For in every modern State, no less than in the Roman Empire before Constantine, there are what Augustine called the two cities. One is the Church of Christ, on whose banners are inscribed immortality, purity, charity, the predominance of spiritual values; the other is a motley host, owing no one allegiance, and uttering different war cries, but on the whole agreed in regarding the life of man on earth as the one thing to be considered, and relying for its improvement upon the multiplication and redistribution of natural possessions. That is a very rough description, and needs to be qualified. We must, in fairness, recognise that among the enemies of the Church there are men of keen intellect, noble character, and self-sacrificing enthusiasm—the very men whom we should like to claim for leaders in a reformed Church, but alienated by our divisions, our superstitions, and our worldliness. Yes, the Church whose Founder said "Blessed are the poor," is now entangled by a dangerous dependence upon the rich; the followers of Him who denounced the tradition which made the Law of none effect, now bind the Gospel fast in the swaddling clothes of tradition, lest it should grow with the growth of the human spirit, and develop its inherent power to guide, to save, and to elevate. Still, when we have made all qualifications, there remains the unquestionable fact. To-day, as sixteen hundred years ago, Christians are living in a world which is largely indifferent and partly hostile to their faith, their ideals, and their standards of conduct. The question for us—a question of urgent importance—is, What are we to do in view of the actual situation?

For my own part, I think the first necessity is that we should give up deceiving ourselves. We speak of England as a

Christian country. We point to the countless churches, scattered over the land, which add so much beauty to the landscape. So the priests and augurs of Rome in the early fourth century spoke of Italy's devotion to the gods, and pointed to the splendid temples which bore witness to the lavish piety of many generations. Yet their boast was hollow. Within a few years those temples had been pulled down or turned into churches, and their revenues converted to the purposes of Christian worship. We have a tradition, half generous, half ostentatious, of reckoning as "Church of England" all men and women who are not positively labelled as members of some other Christian body. One result of this is that all the confirmed drunkards who make the standing population of our workhouses, and all the worst characters among our soldiers, combine to swell our ranks, but not our credit or our strength. When Church and State were two names for the same community: when every citizen was potentially a penitent: when even the reprobates did not question the authority of the Church whose laws they defied, it was a duty to claim all in the hope of saving some. But is it our duty now to claim those who have no connexion with our Church but the negative one of hostility to every other? Is it right to reckon all such when we count up our numerical strength? Is it wise to acknowledge that we insist upon no moral standard for our members? Is it not injurious to our impenitent reprobates to let them suppose that the Church requires of them neither profession of faith nor reform of conduct?

Supposing that problem—or set of problems—to be solved, let us go on to consider some which may be more definitely called Church questions. One of these concerns the attitude of Christians to political controversy—or rather those parts of it which turn upon ethical interests. The Christian Church is essentially a brotherhood. It was by its social character that it won the victory over the Roman state. And when once Church and State were identical, every citizen might be expected to act or vote in each event on Christian principles. Theoretically there was no need to organise Christian opinion, since all were Christian. In proportion as a man was truly

Christian, he would be a better citizen, more conscientious, more public-spirited: but he had no reason for joining, so to speak, a Christian party. Does that principle hold under the changed condition of our time? A great many good Churchmen maintain that it does, and nearly all act as if it did. A friend of mine—a well known man—refuses on that ground to have anything to do with Church organisations for temperance or any other social object. The business of the Church, he says, is to make the individual better, and leave him to judge for himself. The Church, as such, has no business with theories of social betterment. The individual citizen has no more reason to ally himself with Christians in politics than with Jews or agnostics. I quote my friend's own rather exaggerated phrases, because they make it plain how the social ideal of the Church, after a long process, has resulted in a marked individualism.

Perhaps it may be urged that what I have called individualism is, after all, the attitude of Christians as described in the letters to Diognetus. Superficially it may seem so. But we have seen that the Christians of the third century, at any rate, were uniting in what was an effective form of political action, which, before long, put them in possession of large powers. The only form of political action which avails in a democratic State like ours is voting. If the Church neither speaks nor votes as a whole, when great moral issues are in the balance, the victory must fall to the organised enemy.

Are we then driven to adopt the policy advocated by the Bishop of Oxford in his report on "The Moral Witness of the Church?" He would have the Church speak with one voice, not only about the end but about the means. Surely our experience about the drink question has proved that to be impossible at present. Churchmen agree in desiring to check drunkenness, but seem hopelessly divided about the means to be adopted. There is no representative body at present who can speak for the Church of England—to say nothing of the collective Christianity of the nation. The bishops, in the past, have spoken and voted in Parliament as representing the Church; but that precedent is not encouraging, for they were nearly always on the wrong side.

At present nothing more is possible—if indeed it be possible—than for Christian opinion to be focussed in a few cases of grave moral importance, prescribing the object to be attained, but leaving the means to be chosen by political experts.

But, after all, is it possible? Can we dream of so uniting Christians as really to influence national policy? Let us consider what such a dream implies.

1. First it implies a measure of that detachment from the world which Mr. Gamble advocates. Unless Christians are willing to recognise a distinction between themselves and others, and to find it recognised—that is, in some cases, to exclude and to be excluded, and in all cases to count that distinction as one of the most important—they must submit to the deserved stigma of worldliness, and resign themselves to the impotence which worldliness causes.

2. This cannot be done unless Christians become once more a brotherhood in reality as well as in profession. They cannot all think alike, for they are differently constituted and educated. But they can unite whole-heartedly upon the moral standard; and they can return to primitive customs by making character the test of membership rather than doctrine. If they can do that, they can act together and pray together, in spite of varieties of doctrine and discipline. If they cannot, they may as well give up the idea of preaching the brotherhood of man to a world which will judge them not so much by their professions as by their behaviour.

3. Thirdly, there must be sacrifice. Most of us, if asked what it costs us to be Christians, would be puzzled to find a satisfying answer. Churches must set the example, by refusing to let rich sinners whitewash themselves by subscribing largely out of their ill-gotten gains. Individual churchgoers must not be allowed to believe (as most of them do) that no one expects them to incur loss or unpopularity by a strict adherence to Christian standards of truth, honesty, purity, or temperance.

Sacrifice is not limited to the sphere of material goods. Brotherhood cannot be maintained without much readiness to sacrifice pet preferences, whether intellectual, liturgical, ceremonial, or social, for the sake of unity. Perhaps the

hardest sacrifice of all is that which would rob us of unlimited freedom to judge of other men's orthodoxy. In spite of St. Paul, there are few who say to themselves—

“Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be made to stand.”

Have we not been slipping into a paradoxical position? We are members of a national Church, and most of us, at any rate, desire that it should remain national. With what consistency can we even discuss such a proposition as that which has been my principal topic? I am not greatly concerned about consistency: for a meticulous logic is one of the chief enemies of right action. Nevertheless, we ought at least to ascertain the extent of the inconsistency with which we may be charged.

There are several different ways of marking more distinctly the line between the Church and the world. One is that proposed by the Archbishops' Committee—to give the Church a fairly complete independence, and to commit its government to a body of perhaps two millions, of whom only one fourth are men. The qualification to be demanded is neither character nor creed, but confirmation. To such a proposal Parliament might give assent only upon one condition—disestablishment. A disestablished Church may be as exclusive (or, to use the official term, “intensive”) as it pleases. But that is not what some of the Churchmen's Union desire. We want to unite Christians, not to divide them still further.

Can we devise any plan which is not open to those objections? So long as England desires to be called a Christian country, there is no reason why she should not continue to give national recognition to the Christian faith by appointing a body of men to represent the whole. But surely that body ought to include the whole of Christianity. Some form of federation between all the chief Christian communities would seem to be an essential condition of maintaining a stable national Church. Were that effected now, the Christians of England would be recognised as a substantial majority: they would be able to act together in the interests of morality: and they could afford to draw a line of demarcation between the Church and the world. There is much to be gained by that. How many thousands or millions might be saved from a ruinous indifference

if only they were told clearly that they must stand on one side of the line or the other—provided the line is, as of old, mainly moral! How many would be attracted if they had to ask for that which now they hold cheap because it is theirs as a matter of course!

On that point I do not expect to find agreement. Some of us probably hold to the statutory position that every citizen is a Churchman unless he has by some definite act cut himself off. Others would prefer to say that every parishioner may claim admission as a right unless his evil life or openly avowed opinions disable him. Perhaps others would go further in the direction pointed out by the Archbishops' Committee.

As I said in beginning, I am not maintaining a thesis, but rather trying to draw attention to latent difficulties. Instead, therefore, of trying to sum up such results as we may have approached, though not attained, I will conclude by asking a few plain questions which, sooner or later, the Church will have to answer. If the Churchmen's Union can answer them now, a real stage of progress will have been marked.

1. Granted that, in different ages, there have been different ideals of the relation between the Church and the world, to which of them, if any, ought our generation to give its adherence? Which do we want the Church to be:—

A small but pure and perhaps persecuted community, content to remain outside the stream of events?

The soul of the world, animating the body now, and hoping soon to inspire and control it?

A family of dejected souls, defeated by the world, and occupied largely with mutual criticism?

2. After surveying the actual position of Christianity in England, what is our real ground for desiring to maintain a National Church? Are our reasons drawn from hope or from despair? Do we look for a victory, or only seek to avoid disaster?

3. If we are hopeful, how do we suppose the "Churches" can be rescued from their entanglement with party politics and vested interests, and drawn into a real relation of brotherhood?

4. How is the spirit of sacrifice to be revived, without which nothing great can be accomplished?

DID CHRIST FOUND THE CHURCH?

By the Very Rev. W. R. INGE, D.D., Dean of St. Paul's.

Jesus Christ appeared to His contemporaries as a Prophet and not as the founder of a new religion. The Synoptic Gospels are decisive on this point, all the more because they sometimes record words and actions which are not in perfect accord with the Christology of their compilers. "He taught as one having authority, and not as the Scribes;" in other words, He taught as a prophet, and not as a Rabbi. Men exclaimed when they heard Him, "A new teaching!" because prophecy of the old kind had long been dumb among them. They thought that He must be one of the old prophets risen again—Elijah, perhaps, or Jeremiah; unless indeed John the Baptist, "whom all men held to be a prophet," had been resuscitated after his decapitation by Herod. He was pointed out to strangers as "Jesus the prophet of Nazareth in Galilee." The opinion of the populace was confirmed by Himself. He reminded His hearers that "a prophet is not without honour save in his own country;" He said sadly and almost bitterly, "It cannot be that a prophet should perish except in Jerusalem." Nothing is clearer than that He deliberately placed Himself in the line of the great prophets of Israel. The similarity between Him and them, as Prof. Kennett has said,¹ is observable in His mode of life; in His method of teaching; in the essential character of His teaching; in the response which that teaching evoked; and in the manner of its preservation. The prophet lived by his ministry, supported by voluntary offerings. He preached wherever he was likely to find an audience, in the Temple courts, at the city gates, in an open place, or in a private house. He taught by parables, which, in the Old Testament, are often presented as visions. His language was poetical and dramatic, and the central lesson was embroidered with fancy pictures. The prophets predicted terrible divine judgments:—

"The day of the Lord cometh, with wrath and fierce anger. I will make the heavens to tremble, and the earth shall be shaken out of her place."²

¹ *Hibbert Journal*, October, 1906.

² *Isiah* xiii. 9-13.

His teaching was moral and personal, with no creed or dogmas. The prophet knows God's will, and knows that God loves righteousness, and righteousness only. He is contemptuous of institutional and ceremonial religion. God desires no sacrifices, and no house to dwell in; "Hath not My hand made all these things?" The prophet's message was received with hatred and indignation. Ecclesiastical corporations know instinctively when they are in danger. Our Lord told His enemies that they were "the children of those who killed the prophets." Lastly, the prophet did not, as a rule, write his message; he left it to be preserved by the piety of his disciples. In every one of these characteristics the ministry of Christ is strictly in line with the prophetic tradition. Parenthetically we may say that if this fundamental character of the Galilean ministry had been more fully recognised, we should not have had so much stress laid upon the visions of future judgment and restoration in the Gospels. These predictions were a regular feature of the prophetic style. In prophecy insight always takes the form of foresight; divine judgments are externalised and localised; and the slow working of the mills of God is vividly dramatised in word-pictures which are boldly foreshortened. There was never a time when the hearers of these prophecies, who were familiar with the prophetic manner of speech, accepted them with the prosaic literalness of modern commentators.

No doubt there are some differences between the language of Christ and that of the older prophets. There is the note of personal authority—"I say unto you," instead of "Thus saith the Lord." There is the Messianic claim, if indeed it was explicitly made. There is the freedom from mere patriotic dreams—and yet how yearningly He wept over Jerusalem! There is the universalism which is the ethical side of this detachment—and yet was He not here anticipated by Isaiah:—

"In that day shall Israel be a third with Egypt and Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land; whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance."⁸

But all that raises Him above the old prophets, all that makes Him the crown and consummation of the whole prophetic

⁸ Isaiah xix. 24.

dispensation, does not remove Him from the company in which He clearly willed to stand.

The earthly Christ never attempted to form a schism in the Jewish Church, still less—the very idea is absurd—claimed to substitute for it a new institutional religion. He accepted the hierarchical organisation under which He was born, but accepted it with a complete inner detachment, and calmly predicted its overthrow. When we remember what the Temple meant to the Jews, it is remarkable that He spoke—or was understood to have spoken—of the demolition of the material building, to make room for another “made without hands.” His attitude to Jewish institutionalism is not so much hostility as complete indifference. He was indignant with those who bind heavy burdens, grievous to be borne, upon men’s shoulders, but He does not make nonconformity a principle. His Brotherhood was to be cemented by communion with God, by loyalty to Himself, and by the loving affection of its members to one another. Among them there was to be no scribal authority, no Rabbi, no master on earth, no priesthood, no professoriate. Their spiritual independence was to be complete. Their prayers were to be private and silent, their austerities and their almsgiving to be carefully concealed from the knowledge of other men. His individualism went further than that of the Quakers, for He prescribed no peculiarities of dress or manner by which His followers could recognise each other. A man is accepted by God, not in virtue of his religious observances, nor even of his correct conduct, but because his heart and eye are single, because he loves and hopes and trusts much, and because he is free from the three cardinal sins of hypocrisy, hardness of heart, and worldliness.

“That which cometh out of a man defileth a man.”

“Take heed that the light within thee be not darkness.”

“I will have mercy and not sacrifice.”

“Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

It is in such maxims as these that we have the core of the Gospel. The “commandments of men”—ritual ordinances of washing, fasting, Sabbath observance, He breaks, calmly and without scruple, whenever any serious work has to be done.

We cannot tell how far He really expected a supernatural Messianic kingdom, with Himself as its head, to be proclaimed by God in a few years. The psychological difficulties which have to be faced by those who think that He, being what He was, shared this illusion of His contemporaries and pictured Himself as a theocratic King at Jerusalem, have, in my opinion, been much underestimated, and it would be most unpleasant to have to admit that He was the victim of a delusion on so important a subject. But it is certain that He did not prevent His disciples from cherishing this expectation, and supposing that they had His authority for holding it; and if He had laid down rules for the constitution of a Church, they could not possibly have thought so. How can a prophet who comes forward with the cry of *Hora novissima*, have thought of founding an institutional Church?

These facts about our Lord's teaching are not really disputed by any candid criticism. The rival theories of Harnack and Loisy, who may be taken as good representatives of the best Protestant and Catholic scholarship, differ vitally from each other, but neither of these historians believes that the earthly Christ made laws for an institutional Church. The Catholic Church, both would allow, grew like other great political institutions, and the course of its evolution, both would allow, can be accounted for on historical grounds. But the Catholic apologist justifies the transformation of the original Gospel, while the Protestant condemns and deplors it. Loisy objects that Harnack's philosophy of history is static, not dynamic; that it denies the active working of the Holy Spirit in history; that it is pessimistic, regarding all Catholic institutions as a progressive corruption and secularising of the pure Gospel proclaimed by the Founder; and that it is unscientific, as ignoring the great principle of evolution, in which our age has found the key to so many problems.

Granting that the Catholic Church of history is widely different from the little Brotherhood of disciples whom Christ gathered round Him; granting that we must admit *comme deux Christs*, the one the enthusiastic visionary whom Loisy sees in the historical Jesus, the other the divinised ideal

figure, the object of the Church's worship, he regards the transformation as legitimate and necessary. He says:—

"The Church, in order to be identical with the religion of Jesus, need no more reproduce the exact forms of the Galilean Gospel than a man of fifty need resemble a newly-born child. When we want to assure ourselves of the identity of an individual, we do not try to squeeze him into his cradle."

The gradual change of primitive Christianity into medieval and modern Catholicism was demonstrably necessary if the Church was to survive, and surely, he urges, its Founder must have wished it to survive. Its evolution was clearly inevitable, because the Church has, in fact, made or undergone these changes; and it has survived.

This argument lies open to several objections. Firstly, it is not proved that the accommodations which Western Catholicism has made, were really necessary. The assumption that they were so rests on a historical fatalism which, if pressed to its logical conclusion, would deprive history of any moral significance. A different policy might have had a more durable or a slower success. And why should we assume that the Church was bound either to become a world-empire, or to perish? The Gospel of Christ, while it is true to its principles, needs no accommodations or compromises, and can make none. A successful religion is generally a superstition which has enslaved a philosophy and made a concordat with a Government; and what has this policy to do with the Christ of the Gospels? If we may judge from our Lord's own words, He never expected or desired this kind of success.

"If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also."

"If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household?"

"Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you, for so did their fathers unto the false prophets."

The Prince of this world in the Gospels is not the Vicar of Christ, the promulgator of the Bull *Unam Sanctam*, but the devil.

Secondly, it is not permissible for a historian to ignore the history of the other Christian Churches, and to speak as if the Roman Church were the only actual or possible tree to spring out of the roots of Christianity, the only fabric to be

raised upon the "one foundation." The same theory of historical determinism which is used to vindicate the Church of Hildebrand, might, with equal effect, establish the legitimacy of the Churches of Luther, Cranmer, and John Wesley. The maxim, *securus indicat orbis terrarum* is a double-edged weapon, which may easily wound the hand that wields it. The present condition of the Catholic Church is not altogether encouraging to those who appraise an institution by the tangible results of its power and policy.

Lastly, we do not vindicate the supreme authority of an institution, least of all of an institution which claims to be divine, by showing that its present state is due to a series of modifications which were forced upon it in its struggle to survive. The plea of *il faut vivre*, which does not save a criminal from the gallows, cannot "sanctify whatever means" a corporation uses to maintain its existence. We ask for evidence that the Roman Church has brought mankind to Christ and regenerated society, and we are shown how, by hook or crook, it has succeeded in safeguarding its own interests.

The Protestant theory of ecclesiastical history is strong where the Catholic theory is weak, and weak where its rival is strong. It gives a far higher position to the historical Christ than Loisy or Tyrrell, regarding Him not only as the precursor of a great religious movement (a fact which no sane critic disputes and which proves nothing as to the authority and value of the existing Church), but as the revealer of the absolute religion—of the eternal and unchanging truth about the relation of man to God. Liberal Catholicism regards this apotheosis of the Galilean prophet as uncritical pietism; and no doubt some biographers of Christ, especially in Germany, have modernised Him too much. But, speaking for myself, I see no reason, on critical grounds, for abating one jot of the very highest claims that Christian devotion has made for the original Gospel and for Him who brought it to men. The real weaknesses of the Liberal Protestant school are that it postdates the beginnings of Catholicism in the Church, and that it virtually denies the continued activity and vitality of the Spirit of Christ in the history of the Church. The Catholic is right,

as against the Protestant, when he says that Catholicism existed in germ within the Church from the first. The true answer to the assertion that "Catholicism is as old as the Church" is to say "Of course it is, and much older, too!"

The hypothesis of an apostolic Protestant Church is a historical error, due in part to prejudice. The latest Protestant writers have recanted it handsomely, as they can well afford to do. But the other defect in the Protestant theory is more serious. In the New Testament it is the risen Christ who gives the Church its commission, and the birthday of the new dispensation is the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the little band of disciples. St. Paul in the Acts is converted by seeing the exalted Christ: he is forbidden to go into Bithynia by "the Spirit of Jesus;" and his epistles show conclusively that mystical communion with the Spirit of Jesus was the core of his personal religion. In the Fourth Gospel the presence of the Paraclete among the disciples is promised as a real continuation of the Incarnation. The presence of Christ is not withdrawn from the Brotherhood; it is only different in form from His presence among them during His ministry. All this is an essential part of Christianity, and by ignoring it, as they do, the followers of Ritschl give us a mutilated Gospel. It is a legitimate matter for discussion whether the Holy Spirit, whom Christ promised to send from the Father, enlightens and sanctifies the Church through the public acts and corporate conscience of the community, or only by the still small voice which speaks to the hearts of individuals; but it is not legitimate to hold that the living influence of Christ ceased to make itself felt when He left the earth.

The history of Christianity is the history of the dispensation of the Spirit; and we must not suppose that the divine education of mankind has been conducted under a dynasty of three reigns—the reign of the Father before the Incarnation, the reign of the Son during the lifetime of Christ, and the reign of the Spirit ever since. On the contrary, Christ came to make known to us the Father; and the Holy Spirit makes known to us the Son, bringing His teaching to our remembrance, and unfolding to us some lessons which the first disciples "could not bear" to hear. *Conversio fit ad Dominum ut Spiritum,*

as Bengel said. Catholic theology has an unquestionable superiority in insisting upon this. But we cannot accept that identification of Christ with a particular corporation which is the essence of Roman Catholic claims. Father Rickaby says:

"Christ and His Church are two in one flesh. There is more to be known by studying His word as preached and His life as lived in the Church than by searching the records of primitive Christianity. The Christ of religion is the Jesus of history continued in His Church."⁴

This bold claim is unhappily disproved by the whole history of the great institution for which such tremendous claims are made. The leaven is there, but it has not leavened the lump. Nay, it is too clear that the organisation has been repeatedly captured by the Prince of this world and his servants.

The germs of Catholicism were present in the Church as soon as it began to organise itself, just because what we call Catholicism is not characteristic of Christianity, but is the principle of ecclesiasticism itself. The teaching of Buddha was as alien to ecclesiasticism as that of Christ; but there has been a Buddhist Catholicism which shows a complete parallel to the developments of the same tendency in Christianity. For a few years only the Christian Brotherhood remained a society of inspired persons, who felt that the prophecies of Joel and Jeremiah about the outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh, a new covenant when none should need to ask his neighbour about God, but when all should know Him, from the least to the greatest, had been veritably fulfilled in their experience. This experience, vivid, personal, and irrefragable, at once emancipated the Brethren from any allegiance to the Jewish hierarchy. "We must obey God rather than men," said Peter and John when they were forbidden to preach. It is the voice of Luther: "God help me; I can do no other."

The first Christianity was an uncompromising assertion of spiritual independence. An open breach with the law of Moses could not be expected from devout Palestinian Jews, but it was bound to come when a Hellenistic Jew of genius accepted Christ as his "Lord." Within a few years of Pentecost the river of Hellenism had begun to mingle its waters with the stream that flowed from the Galilean source,

⁴ *Jesus or Christ?* p. 136.

And "the marriage of Europe and Asia," dreamed of by Alexander, began to be achieved in the field of religion.

The influence of Greek thought and belief has left abundant traces in almost every book of the New Testament. It was the Liberal Judaism of the Dispersion that acted as an intermediary between European and Asiatic religion. But this is to admit that the churchmanship, even of the first century, was by no means the unadulterated Gospel of Jesus. And, together with the infusion of Hellenistic ideas (and no one can speak and write in Greek without, to some extent, thinking in Greek), a stereotyping process began as soon as organisation became necessary. Even as early as Clement of Rome we find the clear, hard tone of the Catholic disciplinarian.

"The Master commanded the offerings and ministrations to be performed with care, and not to be done rashly and out of order, but at fixed times and seasons. And where and when He would have them performed He Himself ordained by His supreme will. They, therefore, that make their offerings at the appointed seasons are acceptable and blessed. Unto the high priest his appointed services have been assigned, and to the priests their proper offices appointed, and upon the Levites their proper ministrations are laid. The layman is bound by the layman's ordinances. They, therefore, who do anything contrary to the seemly arrangement dictated by the Master receive death as the penalty."

Verily, the Roman Church was not slow in assuming its historic rôle!

Yet it was long before the Catholic type wholly prevailed. The prophet, not the priest, was held in honour by the early Christian communities. St. Paul, in his list of spiritual functions, enumerates apostles, prophets, pastors and teachers, workers of miracles and possessors of charismatic gifts. He says nothing, in his undisputed epistles, of priests or bishops. And his sacramental teaching has, in my opinion, been much over-emphasised by some recent writers, including even Liberals like Professor Lake. He who thrice said, "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but a new creature, but faith that worketh by love, but keeping the commandments of God," was no rigid sacramentalist. ◀

The universalism and humanitarianism of the original Gospel found a far more congenial soil in the homes of the Graeco-Roman culture than in Palestine. The Oriental

religions, which were already attracting to themselves whatever piety and devotion existed in the Greek and Latin-speaking populations of the Empire, were, in principle, as universal as Christianity itself. And further, the Greek view of the perfect life, as a matter of character rather than of conduct, of being rather than doing, is much nearer to the Gospel than the punctilious and puritanical righteousness of the Pharisee.

It would be quite possible to argue that the religion of Christ was in its very essence of the European rather than of the Asiatic type, and that its almost complete failure to attract the Semitic races is to be thus accounted for. The Galilean Gospel was no sooner acclimatised in the Hellenistic world than it took a Hellenistic shape. It became the worship of a dying and ascending Saviour-God, and a mystery-cult. When to these Hellenistic elements was added the profound influence of the Roman imperial idea, which gradually dominated institutional Christianity, it becomes easy to understand the deep saying of Troeltsch, that Catholicism is not the first creative achievement of the Middle Ages, but the last-born child of the ancient civilisation, the form in which the empires of Alexander and of Caesar lived on after the downfall of the classical culture.

It is impossible to maintain that this great theocratic polity was, in any sense, inaugurated by the human Christ, or that, while on earth, He ever planned to establish a Church even remotely resembling it. In many ways Catholicism perpetuated and gave new force to that kind of religion which He died to destroy. It has been, like legalistic Judaism, a religion of authority, a hierarchy; it has been a religion of rites and ceremonies and holy days; it has been fiercely exclusive and intolerant; it has interposed barriers and toll-bars between man and God; it has encouraged a polydaemonism which would have been as abhorrent to Christ and the Apostles as to their opponents at Jerusalem; it has entangled itself with secular politics and erected a kingdom "of this world;" and if it has not stoned its prophets, it has burnt them instead. The whole type of its organisation, and the fruits by which it is known, are the very antithesis to the standpoint of the Gospel.

There is no mystery about the evolution of Catholicism. It began in the struggle for self-protection against foes from without and disintegration from within; it was continued for an empire over the souls and bodies of men; and it is now defending the fortress of medievalism with its time-honoured weapons and tactics. It is not the only form of association which Christians have made for themselves; but it is incomparably the toughest and most formidable. It has been, and still is, the spiritual home of countless true followers of Christ, a fact which need not surprise us when we remember the inner independence and outer timidity of the typical mystic, who likes to lean on God in his devotional life, but on man in his relations with the external world. And we must not forget that though Catholicism, as a type of religion, has little in common with the original Gospel, it is entirely in harmony with the ancient religious customs of the Mediterranean races. Even to this day, though much of its discipline seems to us to be ethically obsolete, it is able to attract to itself and to satisfy most of the religious sentiment which exists in the Latin countries, so that other forms of Christianity are relatively feeble in those parts of Europe where it flourishes.

Christian faith and love can entwine themselves round almost any institutional structure, and in many cases can hardly stand without some support of this kind. These are facts which cannot be disputed; and the conclusion is that the religion of Christ is tolerant of many forms of organisation, certainly not excluding that of Latin Catholicism. Catholic critics are naturally well aware of this; they see that the devotion of those around them is directed, not only to the Person and teaching of Christ, but to the corporation and the cult with which it is now inextricably entangled; and this observation leads them to protest that Protestantism, in its desire for austere purity, quarrels with human nature. But it is not the Protestant who refuses to recognise the wide varieties of religious experience. There is a vast difference between the tolerance of St. Paul, who said:

“He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord, and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that

eateth, eateth unto the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks," and the attitude of Catholicism, which makes these observances a matter of universal and ethical obligation.

Our conclusion is that the question, "Did Christ found the Church?" resolves itself into the eternal warfare between institutionalism and mysticism. Both tendencies are very strong and active in our day. The two opposing types, as I wrote a few years ago,⁵ derive strength from a sense of the danger with which each is threatened by the popularity of the other. The revival of confidence in the inner light has been countered by a new enthusiasm of denominational loyalty, which has been specially prominent in those who are trying to find a foothold on the slippery slope of insular Catholicism.

In the article to which I have just referred, I quoted from Aubrey Moore, one of the ablest adherents of this movement in our own Church, who noted the surprise with which the world watched the phenomenon of

"men in the nineteenth century actually expressing a belief in a divine society and a supernatural presence in our midst, a brotherhood in which men become members of an organic whole by sharing in a common life, a service of man which is the natural and spontaneous outcome of the service of God."

I also quoted Troeltsch, who says:

"One of the clearest results of all religious history and religious psychology is that the essence of all religion is not dogma and idea, but cultus and communion—an intercourse of the entire community. . . . So long as a Christianity shall subsist at all, it will be united with a cultus, and with Christ holding a central position in the cultus."

The lamented Professor Royce, in his latest book, identifies Christianity with "loyalty to the beloved community," and even says that "the salvation of the individual man is determined by some sort of membership in a certain spiritual community." It is true that he finds at last that he cannot discover this community in any existing institution. The mystic cannot afford to disregard a tendency which has won the support of so many earnest and able men.

The idea of churchmanship has proved capable of evoking a great amount of devoted and enthusiastic service. Those who are inspired by it say themselves that they are in revolt against

⁵ *Hibbert Journal*, July, 1914.

individualism, against the ideal of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, which represents Christian as travelling towards the heavenly city alone, or with one like-minded friend.

It seems to me that this criticism misunderstands the Protestant position. We do not think that the ideal Christian is what the German calls an *Einspänner*, a man who deliberately prefers to be alone, and cannot, or will not, work with his fellows. The Protestant values human sympathy as much as the Catholic; but he is much less swayed by crowd-contagion, and wishes to co-operate with those who are really of one mind with himself, whether they are in his fold or another. He does not think that denominational loyalty necessarily unites him with those who share his convictions, and is sure that the partisanship which is inseparable from it estranges him from many who should be his friends. He does not believe that God looks with special favour on one particular type of Churchmanship, that, for example, which makes episcopacy a necessary condition of a true Church. He is sorrowfully constrained to admit the partial truth of the indictment which Mr. H. G. Wells has lately brought against institutional Christianity, though the language is much harsher than he would himself approve:—

“The Church with its sacraments and sacerdotalism is the disease of Christianity . . . All organisations must be watched, for whatever is organised can be captured and misused . . . Before you know where you are, you will have exchanged the Spirit of God for *esprit de corps* . . . Repentance is the beginning, and essential to the religious life, and organisations never repent.”

This judgment runs to excess in condemning all religious organisations, and seems to neglect the lessons of history, which, full of warning as they are against the dangers of partisanship and exclusiveness, surely prove that the instinct to form fraternities is bound up with the Christian religion. The “corporate idea” prompts us to self-sacrifice, and is very frequently connected with a beautiful type of Christian saintliness.

It seems to me impossible to deny that the Holy Spirit is present, not only in the hearts of individual Catholics, but in the temper of mind which makes many of them Catholics. In other words, the institutional type must be

recognised as legitimate, though it is not the only type of Christianity. This may, I think, be admitted even by those who find in the following words of Landor an expression of their own conviction:—"Religion is too pure for corporations; it is best meditated on in our privacy, and best acted on in our ordinary intercourse with mankind." This is not incompatible with "loyalty to the beloved brotherhood," nor with St. Paul's words, "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it." But the Church of which this can be said is not any ecclesiastical corporation as it stands, for this is, at best, only the true Church in the making, but the "glorious Church" (*ἐνδοξος ἐκκλησία*), of which St. Paul speaks, "not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing;" the Church of which the type is laid up in heaven.

A LAYMAN'S VIEW OF THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY.

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The subject assigned to me is "the functions of the Ministry of the Church." It is natural to approach it by asking, first, what we understand to be "the functions" of the Church itself. We who are here would probably agree in some such definition of the Church and its functions as that proposed by Matthew Arnold: "a great society for the promotion of goodness." That definition will carry us a considerable way, for I suppose there has never been a time when the influence of the Church, even as officially organised, has not, on the whole, been on the side of what has throughout been recognised, as righteousness. But the definition will not carry us as far as we should wish, unless we interpret it in relation to each particular period and country. For the content of what, in each successive

has been regarded as Christian morality, by those we must consider the most representative Christians of the time, has not in fact been identical throughout. Or if it has approached identity when put into formal shape, it has differed greatly in practice in the emphasis put upon its several parts. This is obviously true not only of different ages but of different races. A genuinely Oriental Christianity will always move in an ethical atmosphere differing quite appreciably from that of Occidental Christianity, if only on account of the different stress laid upon the contemplative and the active virtues. And while "goodness" as an ideal means something not quite the same as we pass from century to century and race to race, the means also of "promoting" it are not the same; and means and ideal react on one another. A presbyter of the second century; a Roman ecclesiastic in face of the Barbarian inroads; the parish priest of a mediaeval manor; the 17th century divine, Laudian or Puritan; the parson to-day of a slum parish; the missionary in Darkest Africa; the travelling American "evangelist;" might all be good men and the promoters of goodness. Each might be ready to follow the Master in the Way of the Cross, and lay down his life for what he conceived to be his duty. But I am very sure that their emotional experience, as well as the daily occupations which engaged their thoughts, would be very divergent.

It will be more profitable, therefore, to limit ourselves to the functions of the clergy in the Church of England to-day. I purposely leave out English Nonconformity; partly because much hold as it has upon the nation is more sectional than that of the English Church, which, in some sort, extends to all classes and all parts of the country; partly because most of those present are doubtless better acquainted with Anglican than with Nonconformist conditions; and partly to keep our discussion within manageable limits. But I hope that concentration on the needs of the English Church will not be accompanied by entire ignorance of the life and work of the Nonconforming bodies. Some of the clergy, in charge of town parishes in middle-class residential suburbs,—parishes where the success of church work depends on reliance upon congregational spirit and congregational co-operation—will be well acquainted with the activities,

essentially of the same character, of the flourishing Nonconformist churches in their neighbourhood. In such districts every religious organisation must draw its support from the same classes, must adapt itself to the same mental and social environment; and the best ministers in each denomination heartily respect the best ministers in the other. But I am afraid that most Anglican clergy, who have not had such special opportunities of observing at close quarters the work of the big town congregations, are very ignorant of the real strength of modern Nonconformity. And this is a pity, for it constitutes a large element in the life of the best part of the English middle classes, and represents a great volume of humanizing and moralizing energy. It would be well if a few selected pages from the "Religious Influences" series in Mr. Charles Booth's great work¹ could be made part of the required reading for ordination candidates.

Even if we confine ourselves to the English Church it might be thought that conditions differ so greatly from place to place that we should have to split up our subject, and to treat separately at least, the town clergy and the country clergy. It is true that the completely rural parish and the completely industrial parish have each their special needs. But I suspect that, under the influence of past literature, we are apt somewhat to exaggerate the extent of existing differences. Very powerful forces have for some time been working towards a greater homogeneity of interests.

The modern farmer is becoming more of "a business man;" the country labourer, in these days of agricultural machinery and bicycles and cheap newspapers, is approximating to the town workman; and all over the south of England, and in widening circles around the great cities of the Midlands and the North, the retired professional man and the retired civil servant are bringing into agricultural parishes an element of higher education. In what I have now to say, I shall venture to speak of the ministry and of the English people in quite general terms, and leave you to add the necessary local qualifications.

¹*Life and Labour in London*, 3rd series, I., 119-124.

What we have first to observe is that there are two great historical types of the Christian ministry which have ceased to be greatly useful to the English people—the priest and the theologian; useful, that is, in effectively “promoting” what the Christian consciousness of the contemporary world conceives of, and cares for, as “goodness.” I must hasten to explain what I mean in this connection by “priest” and “theologian.” By “priest” I do not mean one who is merely an outcome of the division of labour which entrusts certain functions to certain men for the sake of order; nor—and this is a cognate conception—one who acts for the congregation (or the whole Church) simply in a representative capacity. The mere name, of course, is a comparatively small matter; the term “priest” may be made as innocuous as self-governing Englishmen have made the name “monarch.” What I mean by “priest” is what “priest” has, in fact, actually meant for millions of men for many centuries. It has meant a man who supposes himself, or is supposed by others, to possess the power of calling down certain divine blessings or favours by means of certain rites, and this by virtue of his ordination. Priesthood, in this sense, involves beliefs which English people no longer dispute about, because the movement of the human mind has placed them outside the range of credibility. Take, for instance, the question of the “validity” of English orders. A few of us may have a certain curiosity to ascertain just what did happen in the Reformation period in the matter of the consecration of bishops, and to find out whether there is any particle of truth in the Nag’s Head story. And when we are confronted by a neat theory like the Roman doctrine of “intention,” we are interested by the question whether it can be squared with historical probability. But for all bearing on anything the English people can effectively believe, the “validity” of orders has lost all meaning. Men can’t any longer really believe that absolution by a priest has any effect on the mind of the Eternal; or that the value of the communion depends on the validity of the priest’s ordination; or that confirmation is helpful in any other way than solemn reception into any great Christian body might be. When I say “men believe” this or that, I mean the great body of the English can’t believe, in such a sense as to affect their daily

outlook. I might include, so far as their true working belief is concerned, most of those who persuade themselves they do believe these things. For, in their heart of hearts, there are exceedingly few among those English people who have moved about in the world who imagine that Christians who have enjoyed the graces of "valid" sacraments mediated by a "valid" priesthood, are markedly better Christians than those who have not.

By those of us who approach the matter from the Liberal Protestant point of view, all this will be taken for granted. To the Catholic Modernist such language may at first sound alien, and, indeed, a little provocative. He may urge that even what may be called "the medicine-man view" of the priesthood once served a useful purpose; that even to-day rites and ceremonies may exercise a subjective influence; and that the correct theological theory of priesthood and the sacraments was never so crudely magical as the popular apprehension of them. This may all be true. And yet the Catholic Modernist must realise on reflection that, however much his sentiment may cling to the old forms, his intellectual attitude towards the ministry and the sacraments must inevitably, at bottom, be the same as that of the Protestant Broad Churchman. For even if priesthood, in the medicine-man sense, could make shift to survive the acceptance of the Copernican conception of the Universe, historical criticism would cut away the ground from beneath its feet. When we realise that Our Lord did not anticipate for His Church a long earthly existence; when we see how "the three-fold ministry" shaped itself from out of the multitude of "gifts of the Spirit;" when we trace the development of the sacraments from century to century; the thaumaturgic conception of the Christian ministry loses what has hitherto been regarded as its basis—the belief in a divine right based upon original institution.

But the same loss of hold upon the English mind has been suffered by the rival conception which ousted that of priesthood in Protestant countries—that of the pulpit theologian, the doctrinal preacher. Again I must explain. There is, I think, a permanent place for preaching in our religious assemblies. The preacher can be one of the main instruments of moral education. From the treasury of human experience and from his own reflections on life he should be able to bring us

messages of good cheer when the heavy weight of the world would otherwise become intolerable. He should be able to put before us, with the fresh appeal of the living voice and with the force of personal conviction, the great thoughts of Duty, Repentance, and Trust. He should be able, in simple language, to explain and illustrate the meaning of the Hebrew and Greek scriptures used in public worship. And besides this directly "religious" work, there is, for many parsons, an opportunity to do something for the general intellectual education of the country. The sermon is one of the main sources of strength of the typical flourishing nonconformist church of the residential suburbs. The members of the congregation read little during the week but the newspaper and, in the case of the women, novels of the lighter sort. For any reading which involves effort they are disinclined. It is their minister who gives them a glimpse of the fresh thought of the time, and through whom the ideas, say of William James and Bergson, the verses of Masfield and Brooke, reach the serious-minded non-reading classes. The discourses are rather diffuse sometimes, and the applications may be forced. Still they do give a real intellectual satisfaction; and such Anglican clergy as hope to draw their flocks from the same classes would do well sometimes to follow, and if they can, better the example.

When I say, then, that the preacher has lost his hold on modern men, I mean that there is no longer much response to "systematic theology" from the pulpit. The "painful preacher" who expounded "the scheme of salvation" and "justified the ways of God to man" reigned for two or three centuries, but his reign is now over. His authority has passed away for the same reasons as that of the wonder-working priest. Mankind has observed that the doctrinal sermon has ceased, as religious rites have ceased, to contribute to what it dumbly felt to be the one object of the Church and its ministry—the promotion of goodness. It has not justified itself by its fruits. And Protestant theological systems have been subjected to the same intellectual forces as have been playing upon Catholic sacramentalism, and with the same result. Ritschlianism will quite probably be the last of the attempts to build up a complete and consistent theological structure out of biblical materials, and to

force into a single dogmatic mould all the wealth of the New Testament. Men of to-day are much more conscious of the limitations of knowledge, more willing to realise that the faith of the modern educated Christian must contain a very large element of reverent agnosticism. And at the same time the acceptance of the modern view of the Bible makes a biblical theology of the old sort no longer possible for quite other reasons. The literary material is too diverse to be fitted into a single doctrinal scheme; and no single part of it carries with it any longer the old authority of "verbal inspiration."

How far the literary and critical view of the Christian scriptures has led us we realise when we turn back to the writings even of those in a past generation with whom we have most sympathy. Take, for instance, the writings of Coleridge, such as the *Aids to Reflection* and the *Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit*. Here, in the midst of much inconclusive beating of the air, we find great germinal thoughts destined to bear much fruit. Let me remind you of one famous saying: "In the Bible there is more that finds me than in all other books, and finds me at greater depths of my being." And yet, before his time as Coleridge was in seeking to build a theology on a basis of reason, and in rejecting the notion of verbal inspiration, there is throughout an implication that the teaching we find in the Gospels and Epistles could all be accepted by us if only we properly understood it. Coleridge, though he refused to be tied by the letter of particular texts, apparently believed in an inspired Bible in the same sense as he may be said to have believed in an inspired Shakespeare: difficulties in each case he seemed to attribute not to the author's defects, but to the reader's want of intelligence. But surely that is rapidly ceasing to be the point of view even of "good churchpeople" to-day. When I say "to-day" I realise that to have reached my age is to be rather *passé*. In my youth we were troubled about the story of the Creation, and the Fall, and the Ark of Noah; but all that even High Church orthodoxy has cheerfully thrown overboard by this time. And, if I am not mistaken, the younger generation of intelligent churchpeople—people of thirty and under, let us say—start where we have left off. They listen to the reading of the New Testament, expecting to get spiritual

help from it, but quite ready to let any particular chapter pass by them, without imposing a burden on their consciences, if it does not commend itself to their reason. An increasing number of churchpeople, who neither think themselves heretics nor are looked upon as dangerous, assume as too obvious for discussion that on some matters the biblical writers knew no more than we do, and on some they were palpably mistaken.

In what I have just been saying, I have been thinking of the better educated classes. Let me add that the religion of the great body of the English people, whether "educated" or not, seems to me wonderfully simple. It consists in the belief that there is a good God, that He means us to be good, that it is right we should be good, that the essence of goodness is kindness, and that of kindness Jesus is the great Example. I don't say this is all they will, most of them, readily assent to when more elaborate statements are put before them, or that they consciously object to the use of language in prayers and hymns which are more markedly doctrinal, or that they resent the familiar theology of the pulpit. Like Tennyson's farmer, most of them, when they go to church, think the parson says what he ought to say. But when it comes to times of deep feeling and spontaneous expression, it is a very simple creed by which they live, or recognise they should live. Listen to what Miss Loane reports of her experience as a nurse among the poor:—

"My patients and their friends, almost without exception, are not so much indifferent to the dogmas of religion as unconscious of their existence." (We need not quibble about words, and object that the popular theism involves the most tremendous of 'dogmas;' we know well enough what Miss Loane means). "On the lips of all who are seriously ill I hear but one name; and notwithstanding the strong influence which one would imagine to be exercised by salvationists, revival meetings, and popular hymns, that name is the First Person of the Trinity"—what she means, of course, is simply 'God.' "So far from it being possible to detect the special teaching of this or that sect, the phrases they utter might come with equal propriety from Jew, Mohammedan, Christian or Hindoo."²

There is some exaggeration, no doubt, of expression here, but, so far as my experience goes, the meaning is substantially accurate.

²*The Queen's Poor* (ed. 1906), p. 31.

There have been periods, we are told, when doctrinal discussions did engage the popular attention.

"Ask a man, 'how much does it cost?' he answers by dogmatising on generated and ungenerated being," says one of the Fathers of the 4th century speaking of Constantinople. "Inquire the price of bread and you are told 'the Son is subordinate to the Father.' Ask if the bath is ready and you are told 'The Son arose out of nothing.'"⁸

We are accustomed to think of our own Puritan forefathers, at a much later date, as men who

"reasoned high

Of Providence, Foreknowledge, Will and Fate,
Fixed Fate, Free Will, Foreknowledge Absolute,"

like the more theologically-minded of Milton's fallen angels. But among Western peoples at any rate—with the possible exception of the Scotch—I very much doubt whether a keen theological interest has ever extended beyond the middle classes. And to-day even among the genuinely religious part of the middle class the doctrinal zest is a thing of the past.

The working faith of the English people is, in fact, what theologians are apt to dismiss rather contemptuously as "a vague religiosity." Nevertheless it is positive faith, the very opposite of infidelity; and one capable of becoming intense and dominating without ceasing to be simple.

If this assertion be true, some conclusions follow which bear very directly on the subject allotted to me. It puts the religious situation of the nation, and more particularly of "the lapsed masses," in a much more cheerful light than it is often presented in. Mr. Charles Booth, for instance (or one of his collaborateurs), writes thus of large tracts of the East of London:—

"The East Enders are, for the most part, decent, respectable people . . . Yet among this comfortable and worthy population few go to church or recognise religion by any outward sign."

This is in spite of the fact upon which he insists that

"the children of the respectable working classes come regularly to Sunday School. The parents think it only right that they should, and the children like to come . . . A majority of the children, so far as Sunday School goes, come completely under religious influence. Carefully washed and brushed and prettily dressed, they troop to the nearest school, and are abandoned, without hesitation, to the religious teaching offered there, whatever it may be."

⁸ Gregory of Nyssa, quoted by Stanley (from Neander), *Eastern Church*, ch. iii.

And yet, as they hardly ever go to church or chapel when they are grown up, each sect, he tells us, and he clearly sympathises with the feeling, is

“overshadowed by the same great cloud of general failure,” since “the mass of the population remains alienated or unconcerned.”⁴

But may there not be another interpretation for no small part of this so-called “unconcernedness?” Let us hear Miss Loane again:—

“To count up the churchgoers and chapelgoers . . . and argue that the neighbourhood is without religion; or to estimate the proportion of children and young persons in places of worship, and then say ‘religion has no hold on them when they get older,’ is a most serious error. It is a confusion of formal outward signs and inward spiritual graces. Many of the poor rarely attend church, not because they are irreligious, but because they have long since received and absorbed the truths by which they live; while the idea that attendance at public worship is a duty does not occur to them, and does not seem credible when suggested. To put on one’s best clothes, to be surrounded by neighbours in theirs, to sit in a large, well-lighted, well-warmed and beautifully decorated building, to hear the organ, to join in the singing, all this differs from anything they are accustomed to call duty. It is a pleasure, and, like most pleasures, must be left chiefly to the young . . . To such persons it seems as natural that the young should go to church or chapel, and the middle aged and old remain at home, as that children should go to school and young men to the workshop.” And she reports them as saying, after some zealous curate had been visiting them: “Do they think there were no teachers when we was young?”⁵

Non-attendance at church services may thus be a sign not that the Church has failed, but that in a sense, and to a large extent, it has succeeded. If the clergy could overcome the sense of personal slight because their ministrations are neglected, and could rid themselves of the pagan notion, which clings to us in spite of ourselves, that mere bodily presence in church is pleasing to the Supreme Being, they would take their scanty Sunday morning congregations and their non-existent weekday congregations with more equanimity.

So far I have dealt in negatives. What can be said positively? We may be as far as possible from a superstitious belief in the value of church attendance, and yet realise that the assembling of ourselves together is one of the most effective

⁴ Booth. *U.S.* pp. 23-31.

⁵ *The Queen's Poor*, p. 29.

means of maintaining the religious sense in man. And such assembling is necessary, so long as we desire to give outward expression to the conception of the Church as something distinct from the State or from Society in general. In such assemblies it would seem to be requisite that there should be some leader and "order of service:" the Quaker method of irresponsibility does not seem to commend itself to English people, and often breaks down in practice. So long, therefore, as we have an established church, and a prescribed form of religious service, it is natural that the legal conception of the parson, and the popular one, should be that he is primarily a person responsible for periodically conducting religious services in the public places of worship.

That this should be done reverently is what the people of all classes expect; nothing "puts them off" more than to hear the services gabbled. The week-day services we may set on one side. The people don't attend them, and for the clergy they are, broadly speaking, a waste of time. It is in the shape of morning and evening prayer on Sunday that the prescribed forms of worship of the English Church meet the great body of the English people. And we cannot but ask ourselves, if we take the functions of the ministry seriously, how far morning and evening prayer, with its concomitants of Psalms and Lessons, is suited to convey to our generation the Good News of the Kingdom. There are wonderfully beautiful things in it; there are phrases which, when joy or trouble prick us into a rare consciousness of their meaning, "find us," as Coleridge says, in the deepest places of our being. But the very repetition of the same words, if only so frequently as once a week, blunts the edge of their meaning. The repetitions within the services have the same effect: if we were describing a non-Christian race we should think it both pathetic and ludicrous that the very "manner" of prayer which the founder of their religion taught as a lesson against vain repetitions should itself have become a vain repetition. Moreover the whole service is sprinkled with archaisms, interesting to persons of literary culture, but every one of them a stumbling block to the ordinary working man and woman, if they think about the words at all. For—to slightly modify the words of the Prayer Book Preface,

"Whereas St. Paul would have such language spoken to the people in the Church, as they might understand, and have profit by hearing the same, the service in this Church of England these many years hath been read in (Tudor English) to the people, which they understand not (completely) so that they have heard with their ears only, and their heart, spirit and mind have not been edified thereby" (as much as were reasonably possible).

And what is in a sense worse than all else, is the un-Christian character of much that enters into the services. The Sunday is rare in which the service is quite Christian throughout; in which there is nothing in psalms or lessons belonging to a lower morality. The evil is not so much that our people will be led astray by vindictive psalm or pagan lessons. The time is past when, for instance, Jahveh's supposed indignation with the numbering of the people and his punishment of the innocent commonalty—the lesson we heard a few Sundays ago—could be seriously brought up as an argument against a National Census, as it was as late as 1801; and happily we cannot think it possible that an English woman could act towards a defeated German commander as Jael acted towards Sisera. The evil is that the recital of stories which, if the hearer listens at all, jar upon the modern sense of justice and honour, diffuses an atmosphere of unreality over the whole service. The chief danger to which our services are exposed is not disbelief, but the impression of unreality. Convocation has long been at work at Prayer Book revision. While we are waiting for the results of their labours, I hope Broad Church clergy will follow those of their High Church brethren who are helping along the cause of reform by the gentle method of judicious disuse.

I am bound to say that, in my opinion, the clergy, as a rule, are far too careless about the services. Comparatively few clergy, I imagine, take the trouble to look through the lessons and psalms before they come into church. If they did, they ought clearly, in my judgment, to omit and curtail and substitute—with, of course, a reasonable degree of discretion and tact—wherever this is evidently necessary to preserve the Christian character of the service. If they don't see their way to do this, there are various devices by which, if they will take the trouble to look ahead a few weeks, they can avoid the wickedest of the prescribed things; bishops will generally give leave for

special psalms and lessons for special occasions. One thing is absolutely in the parson's hands, the selection of hymns. And I can't help thinking that even some of my Broad Church clerical friends are not quite without blame. How often have I heard a quite reasonable and helpful sermon followed by a wordy and unreal hymn. A Liberal clergyman seems sometimes to have an unavowed contempt for his congregation. "This people that knoweth not Biblical criticism will sing anything." To choose hymns that would be in keeping with the sermon, and at the same time fairly good as verse, would certainly take some time and trouble. Yet my clerical friends might recall what I have said about the diffusion of educated listeners. You can't count upon your congregation being composed entirely of people who will placidly sing anything in print. The educated Broad Church laity, who endeavour, by a conformity which is often difficult, to feed their own souls and incidentally to encourage you that are parsons by their presence, have some claim upon you.

But, however much care you may take with the services, and however much may be fairly hoped for from the revision of the Prayer Book, there are going to remain, for a long time to come, statements and expressions in the services which, in their natural and obvious sense, Broad Church clergy do not believe, and which the intelligent laity, in increasing numbers, are intellectually incapable of believing. And I think the time has come for more frankness on the part of Liberal clergy. I know how exceedingly difficult the problem is. I know that, in the past, the mouths of Liberal clergy have been closed by prudential considerations. I would be the last to throw stones at them on that account. When a man has taken orders before his opinions were formed; when he has a wife and children; when he knows that he is doing good where he is; he may well hesitate before he runs a grave risk of losing his benefice, or at least of sacrificing his promotion to "larger usefulness." He may justly say that, hampered in expression as he may be, he can still make church-going more tolerable to the intelligent laity; he can still prevent the whole of the church machinery from being captured by the traditionalists. With a certain show of reason he can turn to the laity with the apt quotation

attributed to Jowett: "Except these (clergy) abide in the ship ye (laity) cannot be saved." On the other hand, the well-founded impression that the Liberal clergy are afraid to speak out clearly and unmistakably, is more and more keeping able young men from entering the ministry. And the same impression is alienating a great many of the laity. The clever young civil servant, or the rising young schoolmaster, is very commonly held back from active interest in Church work, or from support, for instance, of a society like this, by the feeling that his parson acquaintances have put themselves into a position which is difficult in any case, and morally indefensible unless they are prepared to be quite explicit, at any rate with their commanding officers, the bishops. And silence, whether on grounds of fear or on grounds of policy, puts an argument in the hands of the traditionalists which is quite effective with average public opinion. It can quiet the Liberal parson's conscience to argue that there are certain articles of the Creed which, let us say, not even Dr. Gore can hold in their literal sense. He may think it an effective *tu quoque*. But it is not an effective argument with the man in the street. Dr. Gore can, at any time, direct attention to what he would call the fundamentals of the Creed, and assert that no man has a right to remain in the ministry of the Church who does not believe them. And so long as the Liberal clergy beat about the bush and wrap up what they mean in phrases about "restatement" and "fresh interpretation," Dr. Gore will carry an audience of English business-men with him whatever their own beliefs may be.

It does not follow that Liberal clergy are bound to preach their negations. Regard should be paid to the weaker brethren; and for the pulpit the old rule is still sound that the preacher should give his people positive and not negative truth. But there are other opportunities besides the pulpit for making clear the parson's intellectual position. And certainly those of the clergy who write for the educated public will do well to take a much bolder line in future. The real views of a man who comes forward as a theological teacher should not be left to be concluded from his silences or his implications or even from his footnotes. And now that Canon Sanday, the much respected

scholar who for twenty years has stood for English sober good sense as against unbalanced rationalizing foreigners, has publicly and distinctly expressed the opinion that the "nature-miracles" did not occur as they are related, the parish clergy need not be so timid. The bishops can hardly take action against the parochial clergy so long as they leave the scholars undisturbed.

If my time were not gone, I should like to say something of the ministry outside the religious edifice, and to speak of the many excellent types of parson there are to be found in the English Church—the scholar parson, the cricketer parson, the chairman-of-the-guardians parson, the pageant-master parson, each excellent, though not always in the right-shaped hole. For myself I must confess that the older I get the more I return to the conception of the Christian minister not as the preacher of doctrines or the performer of rites, but as the promoter of kindly feeling in the parish, the painstaking and thoughtful friend of all in trouble of mind or body. There is no prescription for making such parsons except this: to promote goodness a man must be good, and to help intelligent men a man must be intelligent. But there is one direction in which something can be done by definite education. If you will look back at that address of Matthew Arnold's from which I took my opening definition of the Church, you will see how strongly he insists on the need that the clergy should be in sympathy with the aspirations of the working people towards justice, fraternity, and social equality. We must all agree with him: there is only too much justification for the charge that "the Church" (as synonymous with the clergy) has thrown its influence far too largely in the past on the side of submission and deference to worldly position, even though it has thereby been false to its own best traditions. But I am afraid an emotional appeal to first principles will here be insufficient. What the average young parson wants is commonly more knowledge. And if I had my way every candidate for holy orders should be required to give some part of his period of preparation to the economic history of his own country. I say economic history rather than economics, because I am much more confident that a comparatively little study of economic history will open a young man's eyes to the nature of his

social surroundings than a like amount of economic theory. I don't think every parson is bound to conceive of himself as a Tribune of the People, to attack Capital from the pulpit, and head Unemployed processions. For economic issues are very complicated: most employers are decent people; the churchwarden who grinds the face of the poor and whom the ascetic young parson is justified in denouncing to his face is largely a creation of the novelist; and the gravest industrial evils, such as unemployment or under-employment, are not to be cured by a burst of liberality on the part either of the Government or the employer. I am free to confess, indeed, that the agitator socialist parson seems to me to approach more nearly to the spirit of Our Lord than the parson whose mind is never troubled by social problems at all. And yet I think his attitude is a mistaken one, and that he will be more useful if he does not adopt a doctrine which in its one-sidedness is as much open to objection as the individualism it opposes. What is essential is that the parson should sit loose to the existing social order; that he should not be overmuch impressed by wealth or rank; that he should treat working people as all self-respecting people desire to be treated, and shun, as the very devil, the parsonic manner; that he should take the trouble, without fussy inquisitiveness, to learn the conditions of their lives; and that he should cherish the hope, and do what in him lies to further the accomplishment of that 'vast social amelioration' which (with whatever other elements it was mingled) was part of the hope of primitive Christianity.

THE ORIGIN OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

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This Paper is an attempt to indicate the following conclusions:—

1. That the existing Ministry of Order was preceded by one of Enthusiasm;
2. That this Ministry of Enthusiasm declined and fell into disrepute early in the second century;
3. That it was replaced by a Ministry drawn from a class of officials who had hitherto discharged subordinate functions in the communities; and now succeeded the prophets as heirs by default;
4. That this replacement was a matter of circumstances and convenience, not of principle;
5. That it was by degrees only; and, roughly speaking, not till the time of Cyprian; that Divine Institution and Right were claimed for this ministry; and that what is now called the "Catholic" conception of the hierarchy and the priesthood took shape;
6. That this conception finds its formal completion in the Ultramontane theory of the Papacy.

1. The statement, that "it is evident unto all men diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient authors that from the Apostles' time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church; Bishops, Priests, and Deacons," must be qualified by the admission that the first and most authoritative of the sources mentioned tells us very little of any of the three. The word Bishop occurs four times in the New Testament; Deacon, five times; seven out of these nine references—three in the first case, and four in the second—being in the Pastoral Epistles; which, as they stand, belong, in all probability, to the second century. We read of Elders ten times in the Acts of the Apostles, and four times in non-Pauline Epistles—in those of St. Paul there is no mention of them, though the word occurs four times in the Pastoral Epistles; but the term Priest, while used in connection with the temple ritual and with pagan worship (we read of "the Priest of Jupiter, Acts xiv. 13), is not applied to the Christian ministry at all. The word Prophet, however, or Prophecy, is found fifty-one times—eight in the Acts of the Apostles,

twenty in the Epistles of St. Paul, eleven in the Pauline, Pastoral and General Epistles, twelve in the Revelation; and, when, in two important passages (1 Cor. xii. and Eph. iv.), St. Paul enumerates those whom "God hath set in the Church," in neither catalogue is any one of what are now called the Three Historical Orders included. The situation is not only differently stated, but differently conceived, and viewed from another standpoint. Prophecy, not Episcopacy or the Priesthood, is the "note" of the Apostolic age.

2. The ministry of the First Age was charismatic—*i.e.*, the outcome of a *χάρισμα*, or spiritual gift, descending from above on the recipient, and spiritually received by him;—"they were all filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts ii. 4): the later conception of "Orders" was one less of a spiritual gift than of an office transmitted by those who held it to their successors by imposition of hands—a rite round which material and even magical associations easily gathered. The former was occasional, the latter persistent; and the distinction between the two is one of kind. The bishop ordains, the priest celebrates or absolves, because he has received a particular power of Order, which he can exercise at any time. But the Prophet prophesies because the Spirit comes upon him; and he can do so only when, and as, the Spirit gives him utterance: "It is not ye that speak." The Prophet, then, is an organ of revelation. Not so the Bishop. He is a witness to a tradition; and the value of his teaching depends, not on the testimony of the Spirit, but on the quality and authenticity of the tradition; he teaches "as the Scribes." Not long ago one of our Church papers—the *Challenge*,—like Esaias, was "very bold," and told us, speaking of our own English bishops, that they "are either the organ of the Holy Ghost, or they are nothing."¹ But this attribution of what is called the *charisma veritatis* to the Episcopate was historically an after-thought, the purpose of which was to bridge over the gulf between the enthusiastic and the official ministry; and it came, with perfect logical consistency, though no doubt also with perfect historical inaccuracy, to be associated with one pre-eminent bishop—the Pope, to whom it was formally attached by the Vatican Council in 1870.

¹ 3rd November, 1916.

Infallibility is indeed a negative conception: and, as such, cannot be identified with revelation or inspiration. But, in an age to which revelation and inspiration are distant memories, it is their counterpart. The distinction between the notions belongs to speculative theology: their practical content and application are very much the same.

3. Again, the ministry of enthusiasm was common to believers, men and women, as such; there was no "clergy." "I would have you *all* speak with tongues, says St. Paul; and he desires that *all* should prophesy. And it was rather itinerant than local. The Apostle, in particular, was a missionary, and wandering, or errant—this was the *differentia* of his calling: the sending forth of the Twelve (Matt. x. 5ff.) was a shadow thrown back upon the personal ministry of Jesus by the practice of a later time. We are not, indeed, to consider the two ministries, the earlier and the later, as without points of contact. There was an overlapping both of time and of function: the bishop and the prophet might be contemporaries, and the bishop might possess and exercise the prophetic gift. But he did so as prophet, not as bishop: the two ministries looked different ways, the reason being that they were produced by different circumstances. And neither can be made a standard for the future. "In the Apostles' times that was harmless, which being now revived would be scandalous; as their *oscula sancta*," says Hooker.² If prophesy was the "note" of the Apostolic age, it does not follow that it either is, or ought to be, that of the modern; or that presbytery, or episcopacy, or (supposing it to be called for by circumstances) the Papacy, might not properly replace it. The same must be said of the ministry of women. Its existence in the first century is no reason for its existence in the twentieth; and the converse holds. There is, in itself, no reason why the organization of the Church of to-day should be binding on the Church of the future. "They are equally mad," says Selden, "who say that bishops are so *jure divino* that they must be continued, or so anti-Christian that they must be put away. All is as the State likes."³ Or, we may say, as the Church likes. For it is

² *Ecclesiastical Polity*. Preface iv. 4.

³ *Table Talk* viii.

distinction without a difference: in a Christian community Church and State are one—one and the same thing looked at from different sides. Such constructions, then, as that known as the “Lambeth Quadrilateral” are political, not religious, and must be judged on political, not religious, grounds. This is not to discount any value that they may possess from an ecclesiastical point of view; it is possible that, like the Second Book of Homilies, they “contain a godly and wholesome doctrine, and necessary for these times.” But, while they are to be received with the respect due to the authorities from whom they come, they contain, as constructions, the tradition of men, not the word of God: and, with regard, in particular, to the fourth stronghold of the Lambeth Quadrilateral, the Historical Episcopate, the Arian formula, that “there was a time when it was not,” applies.

4. We shall never get into touch with primitive Christianity till we get out of the bad habit of reading later theories into it. “No, no,” says Hooker, speaking of the alleged necessity of sacramental confession, “these opinions have youth in their countenance; antiquity knew them not, it never thought nor dreamed of them.”⁴ Memorable words! and of wide application. For the organisation of the early Christian communities was not matter of principle, but of circumstances and expediency. The question asked was not, “What is commanded?”—nothing was commanded—but, “What is most suitable, and works best?” “I have no commandment of the Lord, but I give my judgment,” a Christian of the time would have said, with St. Paul. Dogma and canon law came later, and stereotyped a usage which they found already existing in fact.

5. Scaliger speaks of the second century of our era as the *æmpus ἄδηλον* or “the obscure age.” We may compare it to those imagined oceans which filled up the blank space in the maps of early geographers—oceans from whose teeming waters were depicted as arising, not only ships and marine monsters, but “bodies celestial and bodies terrestrial”—sun and moon, Negroes and Indians, lions and serpents; a “great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.” There was a time when the Forty Days

⁴ *Eccl. Pol.* vi. 4. 13.

between the Resurrection and the Ascension of our Lord were regarded as such an ocean of potentialities; and, in particular, as the period to which those ecclesiastical traditions of which no trace is to be found in the New Testament—*e.g.*, the organisation of the Church, the matter and form of the Sacraments, the "Ornaments of the Church and of the ministers thereof"—were to be referred. It was a theory which gave great scope to the ingenuity of preachers; the lively play of their pious imagination sported, not only over the Sacred Text, but over its *lacunae*. I remember one who used to describe what had taken place during those great Forty Days, in such minute detail that one would have supposed him to have been present, and taken notes of what was said and done. I hope that I shall not seem to be following this dangerous, if attractive, path of artificial historical construction, if I make for the second century, not indeed the same, but a similar, claim to that which has been made for the great Forty Days; and argue that the legal, doctrinal, hierarchical, ceremonial, and liturgical tradition of later Christendom, Protestant as well as Catholic, comes to us in substance from that *tempus æθηλον*, and bears its signature. The age was one of transformation—the greatest transformation that Christianity has ever undergone. But it was, to a great extent, a silent, and even an unconscious, transformation; those most concerned did not realize either the extent or the significance of the change that was taking place. With regard, in particular, to the organization of the communities, the scantiness and indistinctness of the record shews (1) that the question of organization as such, was regarded as one of secondary importance—each of St. Paul's *catalogues raisonnés* of the various ministries is at once defective and redundant; and (2) that the transition from the old order to the new came "not with observation." There was little advertence to it; "things passed away as in a dream."

6. Between the rudimentary episcopacy of the second century and the developed hierarchy of the Cyprianic period a great gulf is fixed. It is essential to remember this: to overlook it is to take names for things. The Ignatian Epistles, which may be placed about 115 A.D., are the *locus classicus*

for the primitive episcopate; but the bishop described in them differs very widely from the bishop of later history.

"There is no indication," says Bishop Lightfoot, "that the writer is upholding the episcopal against any other form of Church government, as for instance the presbyteral. The alternative which he contemplates is lawless isolation and self-will."⁵

We do not find in them the idea either of Apostolical Succession, or of the rite of ordination or consecration, or of a parallel between the bishop and the Jewish high-priest; all this is of a later age.

"There is a great deal about the sacredness of order, but not a word about the sanctity of orders," says Dr. Lindsay; and, "If there be no sacerdotalism, no apostolic succession, no one-man rule, and no diocese—for the bishop is the head of what we should now call a parish— . . . the resemblance to modern episcopacy is but small."⁶

The stage was rudimentary and formative; and Dr. Lindsay reminds us that there are communities in which it may be seen in existence in our time:—

"A visit to the mission field is the magic carpet which transports one back to the times of primitive Christianity;" it is here rather than in the long established Churches of Europe that "analogies in organization illustrative of the life of the primitive Christian communities can be most easily and most safely found."⁷

Seldom has a more suggestive and illuminating remark on the subject been made.

7. During the three first generations the "spiritual men," whom St. Paul describes as "ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God," were Apostles (or Missionaries), Prophets, and Teachers. Such persons did not claim to constitute a hierarchy, and had no intention of framing an ecclesiastical polity for the future; they laboured "for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ." The belief in the Parousia made long views out of the question; "the Lord was at hand." But there were also those in the little communities who, in the phrase of the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, "served tables:" *i.e.*, collected and distributed the offerings of the faithful; provided the necessary accommodation for their meetings, and the few requisities for their worship;

⁵ *St. Ignatius, St. Polycarp.* I. 382.

⁶ *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries*, 196, 198. xi

⁷ *op. cit. ibidem.*

ministered to the sick; entertained strangers—hospitality was an important virtue among these simple people; and, in the absence of the more definitely charismatic “teachers,” instructed and supervised the brethren. These functions called functionaries into existence, whose duties developed with the growth of the communities; so that those who discharged them came into prominence as *προϊστάμενοι*—those who presided. Such, in all probability, were the “bishops and deacons” of Philippians i. 1. We must avoid modern conceptions of office and office holders. It was all very simple and very informal; in the Epistles to the Corinthians there is no mention of grades of any sort or kind in the community; the Greek mind was intolerant of superiorities. But in the most elementary societies—the family is an example—the germs of organization are found.

8. The prophetic, or enthusiastic, ministry fell early, and deservedly, into disrepute. “Many false prophets are gone out into the world,” we read in the book known to us as the First Epistle General of John, which may be placed early in the second century; “therefore believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they be of God.” And the *Didache*, before the middle of the century, shews an increasing process of decline; there are prophets, it tells us, whose demands for money, food, and hospitality, are extortionate; whose practice is in contrast with their profession; who “have not the ways of the Lord.” Celsus quotes the swelling words with which they would announce themselves:—

“I am God—or, I am the Son of God—or, I am the Holy Spirit. I have come, for the world is about to be destroyed; and you, O men, will be lost through your wickedness. I am willing to save you; and you shall see me coming again with heavenly power. Blessed is he who now worships me: on all others I will cast eternal fire. To these threats they add frantic and senseless words, which give a handle to every fool and wizard; for, being unintelligible, these impostors can interpret them in any way they please.”⁸

What Celsus says is always *ben trovato*: it is much in this way—and the portrait would not be unrecognizable—that the early Quaker or Irvingite prophets would have been described by a man of the world of their day. In the same way Lucian's

⁸ Origen. *Contra Celsum* vii, 9.

De Morte Peregrini (circa 166 A.D.) would have had no point, had the drawing been out of perspective. He insists on the credulity of the Christians, and the ease with which they are imposed upon.

"If a magician, or adventurer, who is at all skilful in his craft comes among them, as he has to do with a set of very ignorant people, he soon makes himself rich."

As the Christian communities emerged into the larger world, ministry of this sort came to a natural and speedy end. Similar causes brought about the downfall of the Catholic hierarchy at the Reformation. Knowledge was fatal in each case:

"No falsehood can endure

Touch of celestial temper":

When light comes, it disappears.

9. The ministry of Office, or Order, was heir by default of that of the Spirit. Later, in much the same way, the Roman Bishop was heir by default of the Empire, when this ceased to be an effective power in Italy, and generally in the West. There were functions which had to be discharged: the original functionaries had disappeared or abdicated; those who stood nearest to them, and so, as it were, were next in the succession, stepped into the vacant place. This great change came about *multifariam multisque modis*. To quote "the early Church," or "primitive usage" is an inexact way of speaking: there were many primitive usages; and there were wide differences in the several communities and during the several periods which are covered by the generalized term "the early Church." At Alexandria, *e.g.*, up to the middle of the third century, the presbyter who had been elected Patriarch received no episcopal consecration; and the *Apostolic Constitutions*, which are commonly assigned to the fifth century, do not make the imposition of hands part of the rite by which a bishop is consecrated or ordained. But there was a practical agreement as to the lines on which the process of ecclesiasticising and professionalization moved; and differences on points of detail do not affect our conception of the development regarded as a factor either in political history or in the growth of religious institutions; and its significance is on this side.

10. The connotation of a term sometimes conveys more than its denotation. The typical bishop of the later Empire

was a courtier; the typical bishop of the Middle Ages, a great officer of State. Even in our own time, though his position has been shorn of much of what has been called its "fatal opulence," an English bishop is a highly placed and well-endowed official; a member of the House of Lords; and, socially, a personage. A bishop of the second century had none of these adventitious claims to veneration. He lived by his calling, or by manual labour, often occupying a humble position—that of a shepherd, a weaver, a potter; he might be unlearned, even illiterate and unable to read. In *La Porte d'Ivoire*, Anatole France makes the Pope of the year 2,000 A.D. a cobbler in a humble quarter of Rome. Till the fifth century, or later, we find in the East small rural churches presided over by peasant-bishops (χωρεπίσκοποι), the antiquity of which cannot be doubted, because, as Neander points out, under the later hierarchal system independent communities on this small scale could not have arisen. Here we are obviously in a different circle of ideas from that of modern episcopacy, Roman or Anglican. The thought of the Spirit is still predominant. The community is a Church of Christ, not because it is under the episcopal form of government, not because it has "valid" orders and sacraments, or an elaborate ritual, or a developed theology—these humble people would not have understood the words—but because its members are endeavouring to lead the life of obedience to which Christ has called them. This is what St. Paul has in mind in his letters to the various Churches; of "Sees and Successions" there is neither word nor thought. The quality required in their chief pastor was spirituality. He need not be a scholar—there were readers on his staff; he need not be an organizer—he had colleagues who could undertake organization for him; but he must be "full of the Holy Ghost." We trace here the after-echo of the best side of prophetism; an echo which survives in the high estimate of the ministry of preaching in the Protestant Churches, and in their conception of worship, not as a dumb ceremony, but as a reasonable service; also, though in name rather than in fact, in two of the minor orders—those of reader and exorcist—which form part of the preparatory steps to the priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church.

11. The theory of the original identity of the Bishop and the Presbyter, or Elder, was not invented by non-Episcopalian Protestants to get over a difficulty. It was common among ecclesiastical writers of the fourth century—Jerome, Chrysostom, the exegete Theodore of Mopsuestia, and the historian, Theodoret, held it. St. Thomas tells us that the two

*"Olim non distinguebantur nomine; postmodum tamen, ad schisma vitandum, necessarium fuit ut etiam nomine distinguerentur;"*⁹

and Billuart, writing in the eighteenth century, gives it as the common opinion among Thomists that the episcopate is

*"not an order in the strict sense of the word, and therefore not an order distinct from the priesthood, but rather its extension and full complement."*¹⁰

How was it that by the end of the second century—in many places earlier—the original college of Presbyter-bishops had given place to one bishop with a college or council of presbyters or elders under him? The historical interest of this change is great, because the period which witnessed it contains the germs of the whole future growth of the Church. The system described in the Ignatian Epistles might have developed in more than one direction; that of Cyprian had taken the definite turning, and could have developed only as in fact it did.

12. During the last half century no names have been more prominent in this discussion than those of two eminent English theologians, Bishop Lightfoot and Dr. Hatch. The former published his *Essay on the Christian Ministry* in 1868; the latter his Bampton Lectures on *The Organization of the Early Churches* in 1881. Two years later the *Didache*, the MS. of which had been discovered in 1873 in a Greek monastery in the Phanar, was edited by a learned Eastern bishop, Philotheos Bryennios, of Nicomedia. Some not very successful attempts have recently been made to disparage this document, which ranks with the First Epistle to the Corinthians as a source for the Church of the First Age, and gives a key to its passage into a later growth. The latest is that of Dr. Wotherpoon, in his *Lectures on the Ministry of the Church in relation to Prophecy and Spiritual Gifts*.¹¹ It says much for

⁹ *Secunda Secundae*, Quest. 184, art. vi., ad. 1

¹⁰ *Summa Sancti Thomae hodiernis academiarum moribus accomodata*. De Sacramento Ordinis, iv. 2.

¹¹ Longmans, 1916.

the omnipresence of what is called the Catholic Revival that I read, and even reviewed, this able book under the impression that the writer belonged to the school of Cowley or Mirfield. I found, later, that he was a Presbyterian, and a minister of the Church of Scotland. But I do not think these attempts, ingenious as they are, have weakened the authority of the *Didache*: the impression left is that the criticism is subjective and forced.

13. Why was the transition from Bishops (plural) to Bishop (singular) made? St. Jerome tells us that "one presbyter was elected that he might be placed over the rest as a remedy against schism." That is to say, the motive was practical, not doctrinal or based on principle; the change was called for by the changed circumstances of the time. What Hatch disputed was not this, but—in spite of the historical authority which stood behind it—the assumption of the original identity of bishop and presbyter. The functions of the former, with whom in this respect he classed the Deacons, were (he thought) primarily financial and administrative—a theory which he supported by arguments drawn from the usage of contemporary non-Christian associations, arguments upon which (it has since been urged) he laid more weight than they would bear; those of the latter were disciplinary, resembling those of the "ruling elders" in a Presbyterian Church of to-day.

Harnack, who translated and annotated Hatch's lectures, elaborated this distinction; arguing for the co-existence in the communities from the first of two distinct types of organization differing in origin, idea, and fact, and still lying side by side unreconciled.

This position, which was subjected to a searching criticism by Professor Sanday in the *Expositor*, 1887, found at the close of the apostolic period three main forms of organization: (1) the *spiritual*—*i.e.*, the prophets and charismatic teachers who "spoke in the Spirit"; (2) the *patriarchal*—*i.e.*, the presbyters, or elders, taken over from the Jewish Church (as their ordination, a Jewish rite, indicates), who "watch in behalf of your souls as they that shall give account"; (3) the *administrative*—*i.e.*, the bishops and deacons, who had the charge of the common property, and to whom this power of the purse gave

an increasing authority. We may recall the Archdeacon in the later Church, who, though his charge is secular rather than religious, is the *oculus episcopi*, and his second in command.

In the second century, as prophecy ceased, out of the bishops, who, though their functions differed from those of the presbyters, were associated with the presbyteral college, one presiding bishop or pastor (the words are used equivalently) emerged into pre-eminence, and is the direct ancestor of the bishop of to-day. Thus Harnack and Hatch. Where they differ from Lightfoot, with Jerome and the *catena Patrum* behind him, Lightfoot is probably the safer guide. But the points on which they differ are fewer and less important than those on which they are agreed.

14. In the third century this ministry assumed a more questionable form. The conceptions of priesthood and sacrifice were taken over from Jewish and Pagan religion, the metaphorical use of the ritual language of the Old Testament facilitating their naturalization. The transference to the Gospel ministry of this terminology was indeed a condition *ine qua non* of the Judaizing of Christianity; as the various borrowings and infiltrations from the theosophies and mystery religions of the East were of its Hellenization. For the garden of Greek culture had been over-run by an Oriental jungle; Greece was "living Greece no more." St. Cyprian, standing, as he did, on the borderland between the two periods, is the most important authority for this transition. The age was eclectic; the hard legalism of Rome and the extravagance of Syrian nature worship inflowed into the Gospel; the muddy waters of the Tiber and the Orontes mingled with Jordan's clearer stream. The result was Catholicism, which Harnack describes as "the deification of tradition." Had the tradition been a less "corrupt following of the Apostles" than it was, this would have been its refutation; for life is a process—all things are in the flux. In fact, the result was an amalgam of unequal values. Like the image seen by the Babylonian king—

"His head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay."

15. In conclusion, there are certain general considerations bearing upon this and similar questions, which it is important to bear in mind.

(1) From a very early date two currents, the inspirational and the institutional, can be traced in Christian literature; the presence of the latter in our "Gospel according to Matthew" entitles us (it has been said) to describe this compilation, in view of subsequent history, as "the most important work ever written."¹² But internal and external evidence combine to shew that the former is the authentic stream, the latter the tributary, whose "subintroduction" can be accounted for, indicated, and assigned to an at least approximate date. And in the Apostolic age we must not look for organization. There was none; and, as soon as we think there was, we are on a false track. Both ideas and institutions were, and remained for long, fluid; the hard and fast lines of later Christianity were the product of a later age.

(2) The development of new forms of life, and of new combinations of existing factors of life, was more rapid then than now; vegetation springs up in a night in a tropical forest, which is the growth of years in our temperate zone.

(3) The controversy as to the dates of the books of the New Testament is intimately connected with the history of the First Age of the Church. With regard to this controversy there has been a certain oscillation of opinion. There has been a reaction from the drastic theories of the Tübingen divines and from the extravagance of later non-professional writers, which has led to a rehabilitation, not indeed of the traditional view, but of views approximating to it. This reaction, like most reactions, has gone too far; a Centre, but a Centre inclining to Left, has been formed. In particular, the authority of the Pastoral Epistles, as a source, must be discounted. In their present form they can scarcely be earlier than the second decade of the second century; and the echo of Marcion in the *ἀντιθέσεις τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως* (1 Tim. vi. 20)

¹² B. W. Bacon. *The Making of the New Testament*, p. 145.

indicates a later date for certain passages. While, in the impossibility of reconciling the Acts with the undoubted Epistles of St. Paul, the authority of the latter must be accepted—the former presenting a problem not yet solved.

(4) The whole question of ecclesiastical polity would have had little meaning or interest for a Christian of that age. Could we examine him, his answers would be evasive and uncertain: "I no not know," or "It does not matter;" he would look at it from another side. For the questions over which what are called "religious" controversies have been raised are seldom of the essence of religion; they belong to its outer fringe. And this is matter, not indeed of indifference, but of secondary importance:—

"The body and substance of every religion," says Burke, "I regard much more than any of the forms and dogmas of the particular sects,"¹³ and, with regard to the episcopal form of Church government, "Long may we enjoy our Church under a learned and edifying episcopacy! But episcopacy may fail, and religion exist."¹⁴

(5) A distinguished man (Professor Rudolf Sohm), whose life was devoted to the study of ecclesiastical law, has expressed his deliberate conviction that no such thing ought ever to have existed—that it is in contradiction with the very essence of the Church.¹⁵ It is so: in the ideal Church it would not be found. But the ideal Church is not here; and there are evils which, while they are evils, are necessary evils. We can only escape them at the price of more and greater evils; we must endure them "by reason of the present distress." But Sohm's judgment may remind us that the essential elements in the religion of Christ are the simplest; and that there is a true sense in which "whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one."

¹³ Letter to Richard Burke.

¹⁴ Speech on a Bill for the Relief of Protestant Dissenters.

¹⁵ *Kirchenrecht*, p. 1.

WHAT IS CHURCH AUTHORITY?

By the Rev. H. H. SYMONDS, M.A., Assistant Master at Rugby School.

Our most dangerous catch-word in discussions of religion is the current one of "spiritual independence." Spiritual independence is by now a common synonym for a much smaller thing, ecclesiastical autonomy; and all the arguments about Church Reform, and so about the nature of "authority," are being utilised by this false equation. For if the light which ought to be in us is darkness, self-government will not help; what matters is not the machinery of self-government, but the nature of the self which governs. Spiritual independence is an independence and fruitfulness of the powers of spiritual judgment, both in ethics and theology; and this creativeness of mind is a very different thing from ecclesiastical autonomy. Representation of the laity will not secure it (even disfranchisement of the clergy might not secure it), there is no short cut to it; like all excellent things it is as difficult as it is rare; but there is such a thing as the absence of desire for it.

And such absence of desire for the one thing needful there is, so it seems to me, in the Report of the Archbishops' Committee upon Church and State, and it leaves their Report a quite illogical and unconvincing thing; for all of it is built up round this catch-word of spiritual independence. The false equation is everywhere; machinery is put for the spirit; authority is conceived negatively, as control, not positively, as the "authoritative," the persuasive, the influential. Yet what the common man demands of organised Christianity is not a smaller measure of Erastianism, about which he cares little, but a larger measure of spiritual power: the times are not easy, and he looks for some authoritative guidance (that is, for some inspired, and so inspiring, guidance) in the problems of living. The world is in ruins, and the Church is silent, or else prescribing patriotism all round in larger doses. The real conflict of to-day concerns not Christian doctrine but Christian ethics; and there is, to say no more, a certain lateness of mind in those who see "reform" and "authority" as facing always

towards "doctrine, worship, and membership," and never towards conduct. Why, in this long report, is no Parochial Church Council, no Diocesan Council, ever pictured as discussing conduct? True, by the terms of reference to the Committee, the practical application of the Christian principles of Brotherhood and Service was not directly at issue; but it is easy, by reading the report, to see which way the wind is blowing. It is blowing towards a barren land where everyone is agreed (or, should we say, silent?) about the Sermon on the Mount, and where the stewardship of faith is only incomplete by the lack of a ballot box.

But a Church, so conceived, will miss the essential. It is one thing that the discipline which a society exercises upon the deeds or ritual of its members is authority of a kind; but how different is that other authority, which is really authoritative, the morally persuasive influence of inspired and noble thought or action. For that is "moral" authority. In that alone is the compulsive power which can win us from the paganism of our ordinary lives. If the Church is to "exercise authority," it will do so by courage and insight; the Church must have a prophetic vision, not that timidity of mind which sees the future as a long debate upon indifferent things. Most questions which we eagerly debate with curious solemnity are but the battles of ages and days to ordinary men and women of goodwill. Who cares about the *origins* of the ministry? We are the very riches of antiquarianism, with our heads stuck grotesquely in the sand, our other parts exposed to the well-aimed blows of the natural man.

My point is that Church "authority" concerns ethics quite as much as it concerns theology. Why, for example, if we think the matter out, do we say that it is our purpose to be members incorporate in the mystical body?" Is it not that "continuing in that holy fellowship" we may "*do good works*, which God has prepared for us to walk in?" And, we may notice, the reason why Church assemblies nearly always pronounce upon theology or ritual, and almost never upon conduct, is not that the Golden Rule is non-contentious (far from it), but that we have agreed not to contend about it. We are too nervous. *Probitas*—Christian conduct—*laudatur et*

alget, and with it the hope of the social revolution and of international peace. Yet in each new problem of conduct, in each reinterpretation of Brotherhood and Service, it is always clamorous minorities who are right, while the silent, uncontentious majority dies in happy profession of the last lost cause but one, sanctifying its euthanasia by a strange incantation that politics must be kept out of religion: "for things will come to a pretty pass if religion interferes with a man's private affairs." But this will not do. The Church must face the world, and exercise in the realm of conduct, a real authority of moral influence. No class preserve, however, is morally authoritative; it cannot have the sympathy which comes from knowledge. As an example of this lack of tact, of social knowledge, takes that strange concession to the wage-earner which is made in the Report on Church and State. The problem was to represent the wage-earner at Diocesan Synods. How was this arranged? By inviting Trade Unions to choose their representatives? Not at all. Then by what method of election? Not by any, but by nomination. And by whose nomination? By the Diocesan Synod's! Could anything be more timid? or more stupid?

I am not asking that we should run in to the other extreme, and "exercise authority," in the penal sense, upon political conservatives; that we should press for the excommunication, let us say, of millionaires and blacklegs; or that membership of the Church Socialist League, or of the National Guilds League, or of the United Kingdom Alliance, or of any other body of hot-gospellers should be an item in clerical subscription. This would be to change one bad thing for another. The ethical heresy-hunt is quite as dangerous as the theological. The love of righteousness must be a free choice; nor must we forget that the interpretation of righteousness is always very difficult. To codify right conduct is impossible; it has no permanent case law. Christian ethics are progressive; and "authority" derives from an adequate reinterpretation, by each age for itself, of Brotherhood and Service. Any written formula will bind posterity as narrowly as we are bound by the creeds. Also it will devitalise our own hopes of progress; for every written code is incomplete, or partly false. So we can allow no persecution for an ethical creed. But what we can

demand, if we would have the Church authoritative in the problem of conduct, is the recreation in our faith of *social* idealism: in theological colleges, freedom of thought upon the economic question, and an emphasis upon its crucial importance; in the pulpit, freedom of discussion, and some awareness that the application of Christian ethics is not an uncontentious subject. Altogether, the uses of the cold shoulder to the "extremist" have been a little overdone: it might well become less damning to proclaim in church that there is a spiritual vitality in the Trade Union movement, that discontent is not a synonym for materialism, and that even by some discontented persons, high wages are not understood to be the final word in social values.

Ethical authority then must be a positive and creative thing. We may, however, be told that it has at least one negative and penal aspect: we must ban "the notorious evil liver." Here, I think, we should answer that the problem is not what it was in the small churches founded by S. Paul (1 Cor. v. 11). The best way to "put away the evil from the midst of us" is "constantly to speak the truth and boldly to rebuke vice;" evilivers, in the face of teaching really authoritative and inspired will excommunicate themselves, they will even cease to send cheques or communion plate. In practice, when the Church is honest, we do not find the notorious evil liver perplexing the Church by his enthusiasm to work for it. But there are also attempts made to discover evil livers within the chosen fold of church-goers, the divorced person re-married, or the husband of a deceased wife's sister. For such cases of disputed membership authority may take a safe rule: that the rights of effective membership can be conferred upon a man only by himself, by his own best judgment. For if they are of us, so we may say with the author of the First Epistle of S. John, they will continue with us; excommunication misinterprets Church life, which, though corporate, is voluntary.

So much for ethics; and now what place has authority in the creeds? Creeds are authoritative in the same way in which ethical systems are authoritative, by their persuasive influence. "By their fruits shall ye know them." The most powerful argument for the Christian creed is in the lives of the Christian

saints. Inverting a phrase in the Epistle to the Hebrews, we may exhort ourselves "considering the issue of their life, to imitate their faith;" for their faith made possible certain high virtues which we reverence, and by this fact their faith is commended to us. Saints commend to us not only saintliness but that view of the universe which promotes saintliness. The witness of the Church, as it is called, is a witness to the practical efficacy of certain beliefs; it proves to us that these both satisfy the soul and make possible, and even easy, the conduct which we most value. That is the Church's real "authority."

But this argument in matters of theology from the "witness of the Church," has been abused in two directions, in defence both of mysticism and of dogmatism. We are told either that nothing matters except that thrill which, in all ages of the Church, has come to saints in contemplation; or, that some exhaustive range of dogma, as in the Athanasian hymn, is both verbally inspired and inexpugnably necessary to salvation because the dogma has always been affirmed by the Church. How then are these two views related to authority? Mysticism overthrows all authority whatsoever, both bad and good, penal and moral, since it leaves authority with no real content; all that is guaranteed to us is a private illumination whose light only leaves the world of practice in deeper shadow; the freedom which is offered us, within "the wilderness of the Godhead," is not a real freedom; it is unethical and does not touch the social life. On the other hand, the school of literal dogmatists make authority ridiculous by exaggerating, and often by misstating, its claims. Of course, none of us discovers theological (or ethical) truth for himself; "authority," in the sense of social instruction by the co-operation of mind with mind, is the base of our convictions. But we must contribute to this process ourselves. There is no sense in offering us some quite unsocial dilemma, as that "either bishops are the organs of the Holy Ghost, or they are nothing." Confronted by this dilemma, those who are neither bishops nor clericalists will lose little time in choosing their horn. Yet why debar us at all from our natural seat, which is in the ample curvature *between* the horns of the cow? Here, like Theseus, the natural man *sedet aeternumque sedebit*.

The fact is that authority in the form of theological dogma is important only where it bears on conduct. And such dogma is of the simpler kind. That there is a personal God, whose will is love and righteousness; that He is revealed to us in Christ; such dogma as this gives spiritual power, is "necessary to salvation." It gives us an ultimate view of the universe at the point where conduct is affected; but the arid and warlike intellectualism of the Athanasian hymn does not, in any way, touch conduct. In the words *Quicumque vult salvus esse* it makes a bad beginning. Its main interest is technical and historical; so authority should not enforce it. Religion is an experience, an intuition of God; and you cannot compel an experience. "It does not belong to religion to compel religion." You can do much to persuade it, but persuasion must be persuasive. Moreover, creeds fall under the wise judgment of the proverb, that a large book is a large evil. For clearly the more we are invited to agree to, the larger room there is for disagreement; and the more energy we put into our disagreements, into hunting for heresies, the less of it we leave for the real orthodoxy, the real right thinking, which is to think rightly about the right way of living. The earliest known creed, *κύριος Ἰησοῦς*, or, I believe that Jesus is the Son of God, is also the simplest. We have travelled a long way from that brief but revolutionary confession, where there were no outlying propositions, and no circumference of contentious detail. The Church has added line to line, here a little, there a little, and these complicated definitions (unintelligible to the common man, who reads his text without a knowledge of the history of doctrine), are still fought over by the uneasy enthusiasms of those who write to what we quaintly call "religious" papers; for if we are bound down to detail, we inevitably quarrel. Meanwhile, since authority is busied with enforcing complications, we pervert the spirit of religion and subordinate ethics to theology. "Is so and so a Christian?" now means that to a given set of questions, "Do you believe . . . ?" a man can answer "Yes." The faith has become a bundle of propositions about God and Christ, "membership" a matter of assent to queries, not the living as a limb in a body. "Is so and so a Christian?" ought to mean, "Does he *do* this and that?" We exact belief and pass over

conduct. Original sin is strong enough in this direction; need we assist its operation by the complication of our creeds, and by enforcing them through authority? Can we not simplify? As things are, Samuel Butler's witty description, in *The Way Of All Flesh*, of a country congregation, is an admirable satire on the generality of Anglicanism:—"They would be equally horrified at hearing the Christian religion doubted, and at seeing it practised." In the matter of creeds, authority has defeated its own purposes.

We cannot repeal the historical creeds. But we can preach the simpler creed in the pulpit; and we can, if only with the tacit consent of bishops, omit the recitation in church of the *Quicunque Vult*. Possibly, too, we can obtain alternative confessions. We cannot re-write the old creeds; there is too little philosophical agreement. But we can, as shewn in the July issue of the *Modern Churchman*, put together a very moving, and a comprehensive, statement of our faith by the simple expedient of reciting some selected verses of the New Testament. Moreover, we can press that bishops, in their tests for ordinands, should accept the simple creed: I believe that Jesus is the Son of God. What is vital is that no gloss upon this creed should be enforced as *de fide*—no Chalcedonian Formula of the twentieth century. For the moral problems which are involved in subscription must be left to the judgment of the ordinand; he is the only ultimate judge; "authority" in this matter must be self-imposed. Nor *can* any authoritative form of words give a finally effective definition, or exclude debate; still less, if a form of words be given, can any uses of authority prevent new meanings from taking shelter in old words; this is a process which is always at work. There must always be discussion and disagreement; salvation is in the patience which will let it alone. Why suppress it? For to define with authority is but an excuse to put away from us for the future the intolerable labour of thought. But we can suggest, by our own examples, that though a liberal theology dislikes "authority," and finds no support for theological exactions in the teaching of Jesus, yet its own desire is not at all for a nebulous religiosity, or for any strictly limited belief "in a sort of a something." For just as there can be no

corporate life where there is too much definition, but only a perversion of energy, so there can be no corporate life where there is no common conviction.

What, then, is the Church? for the Church is our means to this corporate life, and to the definition of our common purpose. And by what means does the Church become authoritative? The Church is "the whole body of Christian people, dispersed throughout the whole world"—of whom a tiny minority are clergy. By the Church, as a whole, these clergy are commissioned; they act as the instruments of its power and life. Thus it is the Church, acting through its clergy, which conveys absolution, and this it does in its corporate right; "for the son of man" (the term is not, I take it, Messianic here, it stands for man) "has power on earth to forgive sins." Final responsibility lies upon the whole body. Certainly our own Church has not commissioned its clergy to decide upon doctrine. For, in the words of the XIXth Article, "the visible church is a congregation of faithful men" (not of the clergy) "in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered;" and this church, this congregation of Christian people, "hath authority," says the XXth Article, "in controversies of faith," though it must ordain nothing "contrary to God's word written." This is indeed a democratic franchise. It is in abeyance now, and may seem to be so from a defect of self-government in our constitution; but there is a cause logically prior to defective machinery, namely that our laity have lost all interest in Church affairs. And merely to give them, by a written constitution, rights for which they have no wish, is not to create democracy, it is to invite failure; it is to exhaust your resources unwisely. You may take a layman to the ballot-box, but you cannot make him vote. Before Parochial Church Councils can succeed, we need a change of the *clerical* heart—a period of years in which the clergy may effectively disclaim autocracy. To "trust the laity" is useless till the laity trust us. We must, by definite acts, guarantee the sincerity of our proposed abdication; only so can we create among the laity the very rudiments of a wish that we should abdicate. Meanwhile, let us hold fast to these Articles, digest their meaning, preach them, get their existence known. Let

us insist that the Articles are not all a piece of Protestant pamphleteering, but, by their universalism, sound "catholic"¹ doctrine. For it is a grievous pity that the liberal movement in theology often tends to individualism, under-rating the need of that corporate life which is the foundation of all that is authoritative. This tendency is a natural reaction against the clericalism which has falsely paraded as catholicity, but it is short-sighted. *Ubi tres, ibi ecclesia* is a motto which expresses one side of many people's temperament, but it ought not to exhaust the temperament of anyone; alone, and by itself, it is sectarian, and so cannot redeem the world.

It is true that the historical Jesus gave no precepts for the constitution of a Church; and that clericalists have often enough sinned against the very spirit of Christianity. Yet with growth organisation must have come, and it is idly unpractical to protest against it. For only the various uses of co-operation can actualise the gospel of love. Enthusiasm must organise itself, even though the enthusiasm which creates societies is itself killed by them. This is a tragedy, yet it is certainly a fact; but the correct inference from the fact is not that we should accept individualism, but that we should be always recreating the spirit which must vitalise the body—or, to use an analogy, that the rank and file must often strike against the advice of their executive. And the problem is to move the rank and file. For the spirit which is in the Church, that spiritual power, in conduct and belief, which makes the witness of the Church "authoritative," must be a wisdom and a "joy in widest commonalty spread": individual effort is too weak to conquer the world; the world needs a corporate witness. Let us preach the doctrine of loyalty, of loyalty to the Beloved Community, that authority is a moral influence which is based upon a *common* wisdom, and that nothing can compensate for sectarianism. Some laymen say: There is no hope for religion except in a final conflict between liberal and catholic; no religion which is authoritative, convincing, can ever be "organised"; why postpone the inevitable schism?—But nothing can compensate for schism. The central virtue of all Christian

¹ One must protest against the trivial equation, so commonly made, of "catholic" and "ritualistic." Ritualism is indifferent to the problem at issue.

living is in loyalty and co-operation, in the doctrine of the Beloved Community. Professor Royce, in his *Problem of Christianity*, writes:—

“At all times those who believed in Christianity were united in a community of the faithful, were in love with the community, were hopefully and practically devoted to the cause of the still invisible, but perfectly real and divine, Universal Community, and were saved by that fact, and by the life which they thus expressed.”

We need to apply the enthusiasm of this (a little less squeamishly than its author would allow) to the actual and visible Churches, in which alone can dwell the effective power to redeem mankind.

“Protestant” is in its origin an ugly word; but after all the protest was against ecclesiastical and political pretensions, not against Catholicity. Certainly there will always be in the Church two temperaments, one, as it is has been called, “prophetical,” one priestly, but both may be in the true sense Catholic; both may aim at the “authority” which springs from corporate life; the prophetical temperament need not be individualist. In spite of its origin, it may learn to value membership. Meanwhile let us all realise, in discussions of authority, and of penal measures, that it is from a difference of temperaments that our existing conflicts mainly come, and that our critical contentions, as to Apostolic Succession and the rest, are only stalking horses in a clash of natures. From this fact both schools may take a warning. The “priestly” temper need no longer feel the justification for its very existence to hang upon some hoped-for proof that the conservative critics of the New Testament are indubitably right, and the more radical ones wrong; the priestly temper *exists*, and that is its sufficient justification. And the “prophetical” temper must remember that though Apostolic Succession may be conclusively disproved, yet the “priestly” temper will still exist; as would the prophetical, if Apostolic Succession were established as fact. Certainly historical truth is true, and it is a reasonable hope that the common acceptance by all types of scholar of certain critical positions may leave the priestly temper more tolerant of the liberal. But at bottom fellowship will come from sympathy, not from scholarship alone; and certainly not from penal authority.

It does seem likely that in another generation or so various causes will contribute to this sympathy: the increasing urgency both for the social movement and for international peace, or some ethical agreement among Christian bodies; the reaction upon the older Churches of missionary work; and a wider knowledge of religious psychology. If this sympathy does come, we shall have an "authoritative" Church, a Church morally persuasive because inclusive and Catholic; and then we may face the larger problems of reunion. At present, the danger is of fatal disunion, even of schism, within the Anglican Church itself; and the exercise of penal authority will certainly provoke schism; therefore the less of that the better. The new spirit must anticipate the new machinery. Another generation may see mutual understanding, but to-day, however shapely discipline may seem in logic, it is an impossible weapon. At all costs let us avoid schism.

CHURCH AUTHORITY AND LIBERTY OF THOUGHT.

By the Right Rev. Bishop MERCER, D.D., Canon Residentiary of Chester.

In 1633, an assembly of cardinals and prelates decreed thus:—

"The doctrine that the earth is neither the centre of the universe nor immovable, but moves ever with a daily rotation, is absurd, and is both philosophically and theologically false, and is at the least an error of faith."

This unfortunate oracle may fairly be taken as characteristic of the general attitude of the Roman Church, though now-a-days she may be more cautious in cosmologising. Not so long ago, she excommunicated St. Georges Mivart. This well-known biologist had won a certain amount of approval by opposing the doctrine of evolution—a doctrine to the leading

principles of which, oddly enough, his Jesuit judges have since professed adhesion; but he had ventured to express doubts touching the Roman doctrines of hell and Papal infallibility. Discussing his condemnation in the *Nineteenth Century* (Feb., 1900) Father Clarke declared his fault to be that he never made an act of complete intellectual submission to the Church.

Father Clarke here opens out the way to the heart of my subject. Complete intellectual submission. There is no attempt to disguise or soften the unconditional nature of the demand. We know where we are. But it will be objected that this is no affair of ours—that with us the situation is more kindly, the demand less rigid. And this is largely true. But there is a powerful and growing section of our fellow churchmen who virtually adopt the same principle and manifest a tendency to indulge the same spirit in maintaining it. This mediaevalist trend constitutes a growing menace to religious liberty, and is therefore a matter of far more than academic interest. It behoves us to take our bearings.

The oracle just quoted provides a good starting point. Consider such credal articles as these: "Maker of heaven and earth"—"He descended into hell"—"He ascended into heaven." They are clearly based on the geocentric astronomy. I do not know how the Roman Church deals with this difficulty; but it is obviously very real. Indeed there are certain thinkers who maintain that the old astronomy is so inextricably woven into the texture of Christian theology that the new can never be really assimilated. One of them compares it to a spent bullet in the flesh. I do not share this view. But I am, none the less, convinced that the effects of the new astronomy are far-reaching, and, as the prelates realised, cannot be restricted to modifications in our views of the physical universe. They necessitate many modifications of our conceptions of heaven and hell, and an indefinite expansion in our ideas about God and His Creation. The oracle was right in assuming that science, philosophy, theology, and faith are vitally interconnected; but it erred in assuming that any one of these could arbitrarily lay down terms for the others. There must be mutual accommodations.

There is now established among theologians a kind of tacit consent that scientific knowledge sets a limit to authority in dogma. So far, so good. But how strenuously ecclesiastics have fought to retain their old position! They have resorted to evasions, to fulminations, to persecutions. So continuous has been their reactionary policy that they have justified to an uncomfortable degree the wide-spread idea that there is a necessary conflict between science and religion. The sharper phases of the opposition are disappearing. The antagonists are being firmly led by the pressure of facts, and by a fuller realisation of the unbounded potentialities of the universe, to a satisfactory measure of mutual respect. But Mivart was not the last thinker to feel the iron enter into his soul; nor was Bishop Wilberforce the last champion of a reigning dogmatism to merit rebuke like unto that administered by Huxley when the evolution hypothesis was young. The situation cannot be really healthy until theologians turn the "tacit consent" into an openly acknowledged principle. They must determine that, when the well-established conclusions of science clash with their dogmas, there must be honest readjustment and re-interpretation.

Pass to another type of authoritative assertion—"He suffered under Pontius Pilate." Here we are in the domain of history—the dates are still independent (as in science) of our preconceptions, and are amenable to the methods of critical research. Does the Church dogmatically affirm the accuracy of this statement? Suppose that, as in the case of Cyrenius and the taxing, doubts were to arise, would she demand their repression?

The issue in this instance would be simple. But it becomes acute when historical elements are mingled with assertions of dogma—as in the articles, "Born of the Virgin Mary:" "the third day He rose again." I am not now at all attempting to estimate the cogency of the objective evidence for these statements. I merely ask whether in their historical aspects they must be received with complete submission. The answer would seem to be plain. The well-established results of criticism should be on the same footing as those of science, and should lead to honest readjustments and reinterpretations. Science has compelled us to spiritualise our old conceptions of

the descent into hell and the ascent into heaven. It may well be that critical research will exert a like influence even in cases where dogma is more decidedly at stake.

The conflict between freedom and authority in the domain of criticism is younger than in that of science. But its character is identical. Are facts to be faced? There are welcome signs that lessons learnt on the older battle fields may have their chastening effects, and mitigate the severity and duration of the conflicts waged under the new conditions. But there are also disturbing signs of the recrudescence of the old obscurantism. And there is urgent need that those who are alive to the danger, should openly champion the assimilation of the solid results of criticism if the Church is to be saved from a new series of humiliating defeats.

We turn to what we may call the transcendental elements in the Church's dogmas. These carry us beyond the range of scientific and historical methods. Here, if anywhere, the Church might be expected to justify a claim to complete submission. But the case for finality is easily shown to be as hopeless as ever.

At the outset we note that many of those transcendental dogmas are expressed in symbolical and metaphorical terminology—the Father, the Son, sitting at the right hand of God. The lack of precision is inevitable; for the truths thus adumbrated are as largely out of our ken. It is plain that symbolical terms, while they reveal, cannot define. The kind and degree of their authority, therefore, must be proportionately indefinite. In such cases, the appeal is really to intuition and to revelation—two supports of authority which will receive attention in due course.

Evolved out of, and supplementing, these symbolical expressions, there came into existence certain metaphysical doctrines, from which emanated such terms as "substance," "person," and the like. They were the outcome of efforts to think out and systematise accepted religious beliefs. But it is evident that they vary in meaning and value from epoch to epoch, in accordance with changes in successive philosophical systems. The metaphysics of the Athanasian Creed (*Pace* the rigid mediaevalists) is out of date. It follows that, while the

transcendental statements may adumbrate unchanging truths, no finality can be claimed for the dogmatic formulae in which any particular age or school may clothe them. To argue that the terminology has been adopted by the Church does not save the situation: the fact of mutability remains, and calls for unceasing readjustments and reinterpretations.

I may at this point (though it should be needless) guard myself against a charge of advocating the unrestricted play of individual judgment. Such naked individualism is in any case impossible, and, were it possible, would be a monstrosity. The intellectual and spiritual solidarity of the race is as undoubted as the physical. What I contend for is that the Church shall avowedly recognise that her pronouncements cannot be final, unconditional, infallible, and that her members should therefore have unblamed and unfettered liberty to follow the lead of facts and of reason.

On the other hand, when dealing with any venerable dogma, the serious enquirer will have a deep sense of his responsibility in criticising, still more in rejecting, it. He will feel that it merits most reverent and sympathetic treatment, even were it only for the part it has played in moulding the spiritual life of Christendom. But he will nevertheless bring to bear on it all he can apprehend of the rich store amassed by the intellectual toil and spiritual travail of the present as well as of the past. He will not be awed into complete submission.

I pass from the dogmas to consider the psychical activities on which assent depends. Newman tells us that faith precedes dogma. This may be readily granted if we take it to mean that the receptive period in intellectual development, individual or racial, precedes that of reflective thought. But even when thus modified, Newman's dictum must not be asked to bear a heavier weight than it can sustain. Priority in a time-series does not necessarily, or generally, imply priority in worth or dignity. Normally it implies a relatively imperfect stage in an onward march—a condition necessary to the realisation of higher potentialities. Childlike faith is great: but a reasonable faith is greater.

We see why this should be so when we ask what faith can accomplish. It has a divine power: it lights us beyond the

limits of sense and reasoned knowledge. But it cannot supply its own contents. A man cannot simply believe: there must be objects presented of which his faith may lay hold. There must also be volitions which stimulate belief, and these play an important part, as James showed in his famous essays on the Will to Believe.

Confining ourselves to the objective materials we ask whence they are derived? From intellectual processes. This is true always and everywhere: true of the child—of the uncultured savage—of the unquestioning inheritor of a creed—of an enquirer in whom the critical faculties are awake.

When I say that the intellect supplies the material, I do not mean that this material is always in the form of reasoned conclusions. Such a contention would be absurd, especially at a time when problems connected with the subconscious mind are so much to the fore. All that I contend for is that mere faith by itself is helpless. At the present time, the Pope, Mahomet, a thousand competing religious authorities, claim our faith. Choice must be made. This simple fact pierces at once to the heart and reins of every demand for complete submission.

The unconditional dogmatist may retire on the limitations of reason. He may urge that since faith reaches out beyond reasoned knowledge, and conducts into regions where no clear concepts guide, where the roads are bad and the light is dim, there must be reliance on an authority which may be unquestioningly accepted. Suppose this contention to be sound—suppose, further, that the Church can provide for this necessity—the difficulty is not solved. The individual inquirer has still his part to play: he has at last to recognise and acknowledge the Church that claims this power.

But the contention is not sound. It rests on mere assertion. The full weight of analogy and experience is overwhelmingly on the side of regarding the relation of the individual to authority to be fundamentally the same in religion as in science, law, literature, philosophy, and the rest. In each of these departments, authority has a definite function, and can rightly expect due recognition—but it cannot coerce. Of the Church, a man may thankfully grant that she possesses unique and

august claims to be his guide in theology; but if he surrenders to her his intellectual freedom, he loses his birthright.

Let us examine the position a little more closely. And first of reason. True it cannot go all the way with knowledge, and is therefore outstripped by faith. But its help never completely fails us. There are starless gaps in the spiritual, as in the physical firmament; but reason can, in the one case as in the other, map them out, and give them place in an ordered system. Unconditioned ignorance is superseded by reasonable trust, suspense of judgment, or wise agnosticism. And thus we can with growing confidence receive or reject this or that dogma presented for our acceptance, according as it does, or does not, fit into a reasoned world-view. In other words, the faith on which religion is dependent does not differ in any essential from that which the scientist has to exercise. The trustful attitude which reaches beyond the known in the natural order blends with that which ranges out into the spiritual order. There is an organic continuity based on the underlying unity of all modes of Being.

Let us go further. If there is knowledge outside the sphere of discursive reason, we ask what are its sources. In quite general terms, and setting aside sensuous perception, we may sum them up under the heads of intuition and revelation.

Intuition!—it has been hard worked of late, both by philosophers and theologians. I take it in a large sense, and include under it impulse, instinct, immediate apprehension, reasons of the heart, and the like. For convenience sake, I class together these non-discursive psychical activities as functions of the subjective mind controlled by suggestion, as distinguished from those of the objective mind controlled by reason.

The man who neglects or despises the promptings of the subjective mind, thus defined, convicts himself of being at once unscientific and unphilosophical. For they are the resultants of an indefinitely long series of reactions between organisms—centres of the will to live—and their environments. They supply postulates and first principles, without which there can be no thinking at all. On the other hand, we must be on our guard lest the reaction against an exaggerated rationalism in

philosophy and theology should carry us too far. A controversialist has recently told us that, by an act of intuition, we may land ourselves straightway in what he holds to be "the Catholic position!" A much more sober and defensible declaration is that of Tertullian, that the human heart is naturally Christian.

It is conducive to sound thinking on this subject to realise that the leading psychologists of the present day have abandoned the idea that there is such a thing as a simple and definite religious instinct. McDougall, for instance, writes thus:—

"It is clear that religious emotion is not a simple and specific variety, such as could be conditioned by any one instinct; it is rather a very complex and diversified product of the co-operation of several instincts, which bring forth very heterogeneous manifestations, differing from one another as widely as light from darkness, according to the degree and kind of guidance afforded by imagination and reason."

We cannot, then, expect from intuition such exact guidance as would substantiate any particular dogma, still less, a whole system of dogmas! But we can safely rely on the continued influence of that common heritage of emotional and intuitional promptings which binds men together in bonds of spiritual kinship. A striking instance of what we may regard as mainly intuitional material is found in Hegel's *Shorter Logic*, where no less than three pages of that obscure and condensed treatise are devoted to a study of the story of the Fall. Hegel comments thus:—

"Though philosophy must not allow herself to be overawed by religion, or accept the degraded position of existence on suffrance, she cannot afford to neglect these popular conceptions."

The story, he says, "exemplifies the universal bearings of knowledge upon the spiritual life."

It is, thanks to the promptings of the subjective mind, that religion is not materially weakened by changes in specific formulations of dogma. The spiritual leader in every race and clime relies upon these promptings. The Church has a right to lean heavily on their powerful aid. But they in no wise validate a demand for complete submission.

So much for intuition. I turn to what constitutes the strongest of all pleas for finality in dogma, the authority of

revelation. The issues raised are of extreme delicacy and complexity, but they must not be shirked. The supreme source of revelation is found in the teaching of our Lord. If we can arrive at conclusions here, they will apply *a fortiori* to all other forms of revelation. Fortunately for our present purpose, the unconditionalist's stroke can be countered by a direct appeal to the same supreme source. I do not rely on any particular saying, or group of sayings, but on the general trend and spirit of the teaching of our Divine Master.

He was Himself brought into relations with dogmatic authority, that of the Jewish Church. In many regards, He recognised and supported it. But how frequently, and how searchingly He rejected it. Certain of their traditions He scathingly condemned. Of the Mosaic law itself, and even of His own teaching, He emphatically declared that the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. His discourses were mostly delivered in the open air; and it was from the book of nature He would have His disciples draw many of their deepest lessons. He broke away from magisterial and monarchical conceptions of God, and revealed Him as a Father. He strove to develop in His hearers a new temper—that of companionship and sonship. At every turn He stimulated that free and truthful independence of thought which should pertain to those who realise that they are sons in the Father's house. In short, as Guyau puts it:—

“He might well have said: I come not to bring peace into human thought, but an incessant battle of ideas; not repose, but movement and progress of spirit: not universal dogma, but liberty of belief, which is the law of growth.”

The Church, then, if she have the spirit of her Founder, will not strive to establish a spiritual Kaiserdom, in which her members will render unconditional obedience. Discipline, indeed, and conditions of membership she must impose; but the yoke should be easy and the burden light. Her true ideal is that of a brotherhood, in which certain deeply natural beliefs are held in common, and mutual services are freely rendered. The saving truths, of which she is the fostering guardian and the living witness, should be advanced with sweet reasonableness, not imposed with a threatful zeal that compasses sea

land to gain one proselyte. We cannot indeed forget the other side of our Lord's teaching. But neither should we forget that the sternness is directed, not against refusal to bow to external authority, but against love of power and its misuse; against hardness of heart and continuance in evil. The core of His appeal is:—"I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me."

It is hard to imagine a more complete solvent for a rigid ecclesiastical dogmatism than the pellucid spirit distilled in the soul of the man, who, unfettered by authority and free from dogmatic preconceptions, studies the Gospels in their simplicity. In the light they shed, the coercive policy of the Church—the policy which has led prelates and priests to shut their eyes to truth, to resort to unpardonable subtleties and treacheries, to devise an Inquisition and kindle the fires of Smithfield—that policy is shrivelled and consumed.

The dangers arising from the increase of unconditional dogmatism in our own Communion are grave and many-sided. They are revealed in small things as well as great. In the early days of the war, there was a discussion about prayers for animals. One of our bishops, relying on Church authority, decreed—"Of course we may not pray for them." He graciously conceded that we may, if we like (!), pray that men may be kind to them. Quite recently, Lord Halifax, relying on the same authority, told us, with finality, what we are to think of spiritualism. Speaking for myself, I am prepared to defend prayers for animals; but I am not a convert to spiritualism. But, in both cases alike, I strongly deprecate such attempts to burke free speculation and enquiry.

These are comparatively trivial instances, and yet they are worthy of note. For they are symptomatic, and portend greater dangers ahead. Not long ago, in the pages of the *Nineteenth Century*, Mallock seriously argued that a Church which believes herself to be in possession of final and saving truth is bound to coerce and persecute when she has the power and opportunity.

Are there not disquieting omens that ecclesiastics in our own Communion may, in their dogmatic zeal, fall victims to this sinister doctrine?

Over against the conception of the Church as the imposer of fixed dogmas, I would set the conception of her as a developing organism. Newman, although he was fettered by his pre-supposition of the infallibility of the Roman Church, and although the evolutionary hypothesis had not gained the hold nor achieved the scope, now familiar to us, was nevertheless led to promulgate his ideas on the development of doctrine. Should it not be much easier for modern theologians to follow the same track? "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." Let us be bold in applying this law of development to every department of the Church's activities. Let it be acknowledged that she is an institution, not external to, but immersed in, the cosmic process. And then it will be seen not only that there must be development in doctrine, but also in modes and forms of discipline. Those who would stereotype her dogma and discipline would then realise that they are bringing upon her the fate of those organisms which, because they merely repeat the behaviour of their predecessors, fall out of the line of progress. History is not lacking in warnings on this score. Coercive imposition and passive acceptance of dogmas are always found to be fatal to spiritual vitality. And how could it be otherwise? For such coercion commits a double crime: it bars the way to truth, and tramples on the dignity and rights of the individual.

Can we surmise the goal of the cosmic process? Philosophy and theology unite in pointing to the development of Persons—sons of God fully manifested, and free with the freedom wherewith God Himself is free. If this be the goal, it is the wisdom and duty of the Church to keep it definitely in view. She must therefore be ready to modify the forms of discipline and relax their rigour, from stage to stage, as the end is more and more completely attained. That is to say, she must look upon her authority as essentially propaedeutic—its function being to foster and evolve spiritual freedom.

My conclusion is that the sign of a living Church is not to be found in the amount of passive obedience she can command, but in the power she manifests of enabling the sons of men to enter on their destined heritage, the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

THE SPIRITUAL INDEPENDENCE OF THE CHURCH.

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It is often assumed that to emphasize the idea of the Church necessarily involves something like what we may call the Anglo-Catholic theory of the subject, while attachment to the idea of a National Church and to close union between Church and State is held to imply indifference to the whole conception of the Christian Society, and failure to appreciate the part which that idea has actually played in the Christianity of the past, and must (as it is contended) play in a true conception of Christianity as it is. I believe myself that it is possible to give the idea of the Church a very prominent place in our envisagement of Christianity, and yet to be strongly attached to the sort of connexion between Church and State which now exists in England, and to look with suspicion upon schemes of reform which would tend seriously to weaken such a connexion. If I am to show that this is the case, I must be excused if I touch upon one or two rather theoretical questions which have been prominent in recent controversies.

Much play has been made of late with certain rather misty theories about the nature of corporations which are associated specially with the name of the German Jurist Gierke. The theory usually accepted by English lawyers is that a corporation is a fictitious personality—a group of persons (or in certain cases the single holder of an office) who are by special act of the State authorized to hold property, to sue and be sued, and to do certain other acts just as if they really did constitute a single person. The new theory asserts that groups of human beings are not fictitious but in a certain sense real personalities which exist naturally, apart from and prior to any act of the State, that they have a general or common will which is distinct from, and no mere aggregate of, their members' individual wills. It would be quite impossible for me to discuss the truth of this theory in the present paper. The element of truth in it, I imagine, this. It is quite true that both nations and

smaller groups of human beings within a nation do (quite apart from legal enactment) act in their corporate behaviour in a way which is in many respects very different from that in which the individual members of the group would act in their private and separate activities. In some respects their joint or collective action resembles that of an actual personality, and may for certain purposes be treated as if it were the action of a real personality. In some respects and for certain purposes. The exaggerations and absurdities to which the theory has given rise spring from forgetfulness of this important qualification—from assuming that such groups may for all purposes be treated as personalities, and may claim all the rights which properly and naturally belong to the individual human being.

It will not be necessary, I think, for our present purpose to examine the theory further. I will only point out that, so far as it is true, and so far as it can be applied to the societies known as Churches, it cannot be used to show that such societies have any natural or moral claim to the autonomy demanded by those who are pushing the demand for “spiritual independence” in the case of the Church of England. In so far as the theory is true, a Church has *de facto* this kind of personality, whether the State admits it or not. The Church never assuredly exhibited such attributes of personality as it can really claim more signally than in the days when Christianity was, in the eyes of Roman law, still a *religio illicita*, and before either the Church in general or any particular local Church had acquired any sort of legal recognition even in the modest capacity of a burial society. Whatever truth there may be in the assertion that a Church has a common mind or a “group will,” this assertion was certainly truer in the second or third century than it has been at any time since Constantine. And it is as true to-day of the Church of England as it is of the most autonomous and highly organized Nonconformist sect (say the Wesleyan Methodists), although the one body has no legal autonomy and the latter possesses it in very ample measure. We all know that, vague and shifting as may be the definition of Churchmanship, the Church of England is after all a group of human beings which does to a certain extent act as a group. The Church has done very little indeed through its legal

machinery, yet it has done and does a great deal all the same. There is a real meaning in saying that the Church of England has done such and such things, and possesses such and such characteristics—in saying, for instance, that “the Church” persecuted Colenso and F. D. Maurice, that it long rejected the teaching of the Geologists and of Darwin, but has now accepted it, that it was the pioneer of elementary education, that it is fond of compromise, and so on. And yet none of these things which the Church does or is, depends upon any legally recognized action of the Church, which, as a corporation, is unknown to the law. If it is suggested¹ that every group of men which exhibits the characteristics of group action insisted upon by the supporters of the theory ought to be recognized as a corporation by the State—still more if it is suggested that all its group activities ought to be recognized by law, that does not at all follow from the theory. A band of highwaymen or a no-conscription fellowship may exhibit the characteristics of group-personality quite as fully as a University or a Church or a Benevolent Society. Every State must have the right of determining what societies it will allow to exist within its borders, and what powers it will entrust to each of them.

Before leaving this rather nebulous region of thought, I would suggest that the true element in the fashionable theories about group-personality rather makes against the contention of the new school. In so far as there is truth in the theory of a general will (which is, of course, closely associated with the theory of group-personality), it is (as has often been insisted by its defenders) by no means necessary that the society to which a general will is attributed should be governed in an ultra-democratic fashion—that is to say, that its supreme governing body should be the majority of its members. It is one of the worst mistakes of the recent attempts to use such theories in the interest of the movement for “spiritual independence,” or even of disestablishment, that its upholders are unconsciously so penetrated with modern democratic ideas that they hardly seem able to realize that there may be such a thing as a society which is not governed by a majority, and

¹ As seems to be done by Dr. Figgis in his powerful, but (as it seems to me) misleading book *Churches in the Modern States*, and by Mr. Temple in *Mens Creatrix*, p. 224.

whose general will may, nevertheless, be very effectively expressed. An hereditary monarchy has *sometimes*—only sometimes, be it observed—expressed the true general will of a society better than some democratic governments have done. Napoleon's legislation for France was probably a much better expression of the mind of revolutionary France than the Convention. And when we do come to societies actually governed by an Assembly, it must not be supposed that a bare majority of such an Assembly necessarily expresses the general will in the sense in which that term is used by the philosophers who are most attached to the term. They insist very strongly that a general vote—the vote of a majority—does not always express the true general will. In fact, you do not get a true general will at all unless it represents much more than a bare majority.

In the Middle Ages, accustomed as they were to government by Assemblies, it was only by very slow degrees that it came to be recognized that the minority must give way to and be bound by the decision of a bare majority or even of any majority. "The medieval Parliament," says the late Prof. Maitland, "legislated only by unanimity"—which meant, no doubt, in practice that, when the big men and the mass of their adherents were agreed, any small minority of the smaller people was shouted down or ignored, but there was no actual counting of heads. I insist upon this consideration because it is of the utmost importance that we should not read the earliest Christian doctrine of the Church in the light supplied by modern theories as to the divine right of the odd man.

I now turn to a quite different line of approach to the subject. The claim for autonomy may be based, not upon metaphysics, good or bad, about groups and corporations, but upon grounds of authority. It may be contended that our Lord conferred certain powers upon the Church, and that, consequently, Christians are not justified in accepting an arrangement by which the voice of the Church's own members is liable to be overborne by persons who are in no sense members of it. What are we to say to this plea? The question is constantly argued as if criticism had taught us nothing. I need not repeat what was said yesterday as to the

critical unreliability of the passages usually quoted for this purpose. We cannot treat the sayings about the Church found only in the first Gospel as well-authenticated sayings of the Master. Nor will I enter again upon the question—In what sense was the Church founded by our Lord Himself? Certainly, as a matter of historical fact, the Christian Church grew out of the little band of disciples by which Jesus surrounded Himself, and some of whom He specially invited to aid Him in preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom. Without going into the much-disputed eschatological question (in which my own position would be nearer to that of the Dean of St. Paul's than to that of Mr. Wilkinson) we may even say that probably, before He left them, He thought of those whom He was leaving behind as destined to carry on His work after His departure, were the time short or long. And all through His teaching, though we must allow, even in the passages which rest upon the best authority, for a little colouring by the mind of the Apostolic Church, He did address His disciples as forming a band of brothers who were to be marked out from the world by attachment to a very definite and distinctive ideal of life. But all this falls very far short of the claim that our Lord thought of His disciples as forming a corporate body with an executive, a judicature, and a supreme legislative Assembly, submission to a majority of whose members was to constitute an essential element—if not *the* essential element—in the new religion which He was founding. No one who has really grasped the effect of modern criticism as applied to the early Christian documents, can well fail to identify himself with the admission of Mr. Rawlinson—the one member of the “Foundations” group who writes as an avowed “Catholic”—that:

“A close critical examination of the New Testament of documents, is making it more and more difficult to conceive of the Master as having definitely and explicitly *legislated* . . . with regard to His future Church.”⁸

Even if we accepted every saying attributed to Him in every one of the four Gospels, that would not justify us attributing to Him the idea of the Church as a legislative

⁸ *Foundations*, p. 385.

society, in which all things were to be determined by counting of heads.

When we turn from the pages of the Gospels to the writing of St. Paul and the early Christian literature generally, there indeed, it is scarcely possible to exaggerate the prominence of the idea of the Church. But even here we must not read into these writings the ideas of later times. Here we have been greatly helped to see clearly by the theory of Sohm.⁴ His view is that the only Ministry which the Church possessed in the Apostolic Age was a "charismatic" Ministry: men were appointed to their offices not by a vote of the Church but by their manifest possession of the appropriate charisma or spiritual gift. According to Sohm all kinds of ministry—that of the "Bishops and Deacons" as much as that of the Apostles and Prophets—were originally "charismatic." The idea of the Church as a corporate body with a law of its own, and official or assemblies claiming legal authority over its members is, Sohm tells us, completely anachronistic. Particularly so is the notion that the local Church was a member of a federation of Churches, bound to submit its own judgement to that of the larger body.

The theory as to the relation between the local Church and the Church at large which prevailed in Apostolic times was, according to Sohm, the theory that, the Holy Spirit being present in each group of Christians which was in the habit of meeting together, each such group of Christians constituted the Church, and was the whole Church. The Church was, so to speak, a spiritual entity which incarnated itself in each and every Church, no matter how small. I may not stop to examine this theory in detail. Like most German theories, it seems to me to involve some exaggeration and one-sidedness. Every Christian may no doubt have been free to prophesy or to speak with tongues, especially when several were allowed to speak simultaneously; but I cannot believe that in the primitive Church, any more than in any other society of sane human beings, everybody who thought he had the charisma of ruling would have been allowed to rule, and would have been

⁴A very full account of this theory has been given by Mr. Walter Lowrie in *The Church and its organization in primitive and Catholic times*. Longmans, New York, 1904.

tamely submitted to by the rest. The theory is far too definite and too speculative for us to suppose that it was ever deliberately and consistently thought out by St. Paul or any other Christian of the Apostolic age. After all, St. Paul's "We have no such custom, nor the Churches of God," does imply the principle that the local Church should submit to the general practice of Christians. But negatively, Sohm's theory is of value as a warning against the assumption that the principle of majority voting, whether the majority be supposed to consist of Bishops or Presbyters, or laity was deliberately accepted and practised in the primitive Church. I suspect that a primitive Church Assembly was much more like the medieval Parliament which legislated only by unanimity or something very like it. I doubt whether in the Church of Corinth a one-third minority of Paulines would have allowed themselves to be talked down by a two-thirds majority of Petrines, nor does St. Paul ever imply that they were bound to do so. I would remind you in this connexion that it has been held by some later Canonists that the decisions even of a General Council are binding only when there is "moral unanimity." And this is at least a more reasonable view than that which attributed equal weight to the vote of each petty Bishop of an Italian village, and to that of the spiritual ruler of a vast diocese in Germany or in England—a theory which throughout the later middle-age and afterwards proved the most effectual of all barriers against reform. Of course I am not suggesting that, because the principle of majority-voting can claim no sanction from the teaching of Lord and of the Apostles, it may not have been a perfectly reasonable mode of Church government in later times. What we want to get out of the way is the assumption that the Church is for ever committed to a particular type of Church government which can claim any sort of divine or final authority. These questions of Church government cannot be decided by authority any more than they can be decided by a pseudo-philosophic theory about societies being personalities or having wills or souls or anything of the kind.

How, then, are we to decide what is a reasonable mode of government for a Christian Church in the twentieth or any other century? I submit that, just as in the case of any secular

government, the authority which a Church—whether the whole or any particular local Church—can justly claim is due to the fact of that authority being necessary to enable the Society to attain its true end. From this it follows that the way in which it may best be governed at any given time and place must be determined by the question what constitution—what constitution which can practically be secured—will best conduce to the Society attaining its true end. This must govern its relation to other Societies, especially to States, as well as its internal constitution. That is the test which I would apply in facing the questions: “What amount and what sort of spiritual independence will best enable the Church to realize its true ideal—the ideal which is in germ embodied in the teaching of our Lord and of early Christianity,—and in what way can this independence be best secured?”

Upon this principle we cannot say that there is any *a priori* reason why the Church should not submit to be governed by the State. When a whole nation became Christian, it was not an essentially unreasonable arrangement (though, of course, I do not deny that it had its dangers) that its ecclesiastical affairs should be controlled, in the last resort, by the same authorities which controlled its temporal affairs. But it will be said: “That is not the case now: it is surely unreasonable and absurd that a Christian Church should be governed by a Parliament which contains many who are not members of that particular Church, and some who are not Christians at all in the vaguest and most latitudinarian sense of that term.” I admit that *prima facie* the natural thing would seem to be that a Church should be governed by its own members and by them only. But it must be remembered that a nation may be in a very real sense a Christian nation, though not all its members are personally Christians. The general will is not necessarily the will of each.

Both Great Britain and its Parliament are at this moment bellicose, though both contain pacifists. Even when Parliament consisted of none but nominal Christians and members of the Church of England, it was only imperfectly Christian—very imperfectly so. Is not the House of Commons at this moment, with all its Jews and Agnostics, really a more Christian body

than the House which passed the Statute *de hæretico comburendo*, or the House which Walpole managed by bribery? And you may say the same thing even of the Church. The Council of Nicaea included some very bad Christians, and even collectively it was very imperfectly Christian. So that after all, autonomy does not necessarily secure that the mind which expresses itself in the government of the Church shall be Christian, nor does the absence of autonomy necessarily exclude such a Christian mind. It is at least an *a priori* possibility that the system under which the Church is controlled by the State—say that which prevails at the present moment in England—should express a more Christian mind and will, should be more conducive to the ends of the Church, should even secure a better representation of the true mind of its own members (upon any possible definition of membership) than some system of democratic autonomy. It must not be assumed that the kind of control which Parliament and the Courts and the Executive Government exercise over the Church is necessarily inconsistent with spiritual independence, and after all even spiritual independence is only a means to spiritual efficiency.

The sole question for us, I submit, is, will the existing relations between Church and State conduce to the Church doing its work well, or will any practicable modification enable it to do it better? Which will do most to promote the coming of the Kingdom of God in this land?

“Spiritual independence” is a taking phrase. Doubtless “spiritual independence” is a good thing. But “spiritual independence” is not the same thing as the legal independence of ecclesiastical Assemblies, however constituted. Discussions on this subject seem to be largely vitiated by the assumption that a Society must necessarily do its work and express its true corporate mind by means of a majority vote in some Assembly whether of its officials or of all its members. I believe that the Church of the fourth century was a blessing to the world; but it was so in spite of, rather than by means of its Synods. The present relations between Church and State do not interfere with the spiritual independence of individual laymen, and they certainly increase the spiritual independence of individual

clergymen. When Nonconformist ministers join the Church of England, I believe that the avowed motive is very often to acquire the greater liberty which our system allows to the clergy. Nor does the system prevent practical co-operation between its members for all sorts of social, moral, and religious purposes. There is nothing in the legal arrangements to prevent the fullest collective action of the Church, if you will only get rid of the idea that collective action must necessarily mean majority rule.

Supposing there were in the Church of England at large that zeal for righteousness which a Church ought to possess, would it lack the means of expressing and enforcing its mind, even if its Convocations and Diocesan Conferences did not exist at all? If all the country parsons and all the country squires and all the farmer-churchwardens had really cared ten years ago that agricultural labourers should have an adequate wage, the Church of England would have had no difficulty in so acting upon public opinion that they would have got that adequate wage long ago. It probably would not have effected its object by resolutions of Convocation, which nobody heeds. In modern times the Churches count for a great deal, and might count for a great deal more if they only had in them more of the Spirit of Christ, but ecclesiastical Assemblies, in established and unestablished Churches alike, count, and will probably continue to count, for comparatively little. It is impossible to read much which is being written on this subject without seeing that to a large extent the "independence" which is being sought is not independence in the doing of really spiritual work, but the power to crush dissentient minorities, to narrow the definition of Churchmanship, to impose upon clergymen and laymen the ideas, theological and moral, of the majority—that is to say, of a majority in an Assembly of clergymen and more or less clerically-minded laymen. Too often, I fear, the liberty for which a certain school of reformers are pining and panting is the liberty to turn somebody out. There are many who seem to value a theory of the Church, a form of Church organization, a definition of Church membership in exact proportion to the number of people that it will exclude.

I would remind you of Lord Acton's pregnant saying that the true measure of liberty attained in any community is the protection which it affords to minorities.

Are we then to say that the present relations between Church and State offer no obstacle to the spiritual independence of the Church in the true sense of the word—to that kind of independence which is conducive to real spiritual efficiency? I do not say that. I think those liberals are wrong who seem to advocate simple, blank opposition to any attempt to alter the present relations between Church and State. They are wrong, as it seems to me, for two reasons:—

(1) The Church does need reform, and reform of a kind which it is impossible to expect from the direct action of Parliament. If Parliament would undertake a revision of the Prayer-book, the result might not impossibly be quite as satisfactory as any which is likely to come from the activities of Convocations and Central Church Councils, clerical or lay, reformed or unreformed. But Parliament simply will not do it. We must have a Church legislature other than Parliament, and this legislature must obviously include laymen, if Parliament is to be induced to surrender its right to discuss and amend its proposals in detail.

(2) We must recognize the fact that the Church of England, though, from one point of view, a National Church, and properly therefore in the last resort controlled by the Nation's representatives, is also a particular Church—one among many religious bodies within the Nation—with an attached body of adherents who quite naturally and reasonably claim that, on such matters as the regulation of public worship, they should have a larger and more direct voice than those who do not choose to take up their legal right of effective membership in the National Church. Even the narrower ecclesiastical sentiment, both among clergy and laity, cannot be simply ignored. I do not, indeed, think that the kind of laymen who for the most part sit in the lay Houses of Convocation and the Diocesan Conferences are fair representatives of the mass even of the Church-going laity. But we must not fall into the opposite exaggeration of assuming that the narrower Churchmanship is wholly clerical, or that all

laymen—even all educated laymen—are what we in this Union should recognize as “liberal.” If we simply adopt a non-possumus attitude towards the claims made by a considerable section of the most attached laity of the Church, we shall drive them into the ranks of the Disestablishers. There are many features in the Report of the Archbishops’ Committee which I look upon with great suspicion—some even of their actual proposals for immediate reform, apart from the more radical suggestions which are thrown out as the ultimate aim of the wilder spirits among them. Our true policy is, as it seems to me, to suggest, and to agitate for, considerable amendments. If modification is refused, it will be time enough then to consider the question of joining the party of thorough-going opposition which is sure to show itself when these proposals are seriously brought before Parliament.

I will attempt briefly to suggest the direction which our efforts should take:—

(1) We should insist upon a real Parliamentary control, not an illusory negative voice, given in a way which would make opposition by private members impossible, or which would enable the whole thing to be hurried through under what is called the 11 o’clock rule by a small knot of ecclesiastically-minded members. How exactly to modify the wording of the proposed Statute is a difficult and technical question. If the Canons of the Church Council are simply to lie on the table, they should lie there for much more than 40 days, and I think a vote of some kind ought to be necessary, and not the mere absence of a petition against the proposal.

(2) The sphere of action assigned to the new Church Body should be carefully limited in the Act. The proposed Council should not have *carte blanche* to re-distribute the revenues of the Church, to abolish the existing Church Courts, to frame the much-needed reform of patronage, to abolish Deans, or to transfer the appointment of Bishops to Diocesan Synods. Details of worship, questions of rubrics and ritual, of Articles and Church order—these matters are the proper sphere of a distinctive Church legislature, subject always to the veto of Parliament. More revolutionary changes in the distribution or

application of the property which the Nation has assigned to the National Church should require a distinct Act of Parliament, or in matters of administrative detail be committed by Parliament to a definite authority such as a reformed Ecclesiastical Commission, which would represent the mind of the whole nation better than a Church Council elected in the manner proposed by the Committee.

(3) The proposal for an Ecclesiastical Committee of the Privy Council empowered in certain cases to give the royal assent to Canons of the new Church legislature without even the negative control of Parliament seems to me a most insidious proposal, which should be opposed to the last ditch.

(4) We should, I think, try to get a wider franchise than the Committee proposes—something of the kind which actually exists in most of the Anglican Churches outside England. Baptism and a declaration of Church membership⁵ should qualify for a vote.

(5) We should insist on real legal powers of action being granted to the parochial Church Councils before such powers are granted to the Central and Diocesan bodies. It is only in the parochial Church Councils that we can hope for a long time to come to get the average layman, especially of the less wealthy classes—as distinct from the narrower circle of ecclesiastically-minded persons—to interest himself seriously in the affairs of his Church. If the giving of such powers is left to the proposed Church Council, there is no security that they will ever be given.

Women should be admissible not only to the parochial but to the diocesan Councils, even if their admission to the supreme Church Council be adjourned for the present.

I have tried to show that the true spiritual independence of the Church does not demand that unlimited tyranny of the majority in a narrowly constituted ecclesiastical Assembly which is what some people apparently understand by it. The main features of what we call establishment do not, I believe, destroy but rather promote true spiritual independence. The dominance of the higher mind of the Church is promoted, not retarded by the

⁵ Possibly including some measure of Church attendance.

present arrangements—by the supreme control of Parliament over ecclesiastical legislatures, the supremacy of a lay tribunal in ecclesiastical affairs, the appointment of certain Church officials by the Prime Minister. Even if we understand by the Church merely the regular Church-goers or the communicants, the Bishops selected by the Prime Minister (Deans are under a cloud, and I had better say nothing about them) are really better representatives of Church opinion—of all schools in the Church except the most progressive and the most reactionary—than the Bishops who would probably be elected by Diocesan Synods or the Bishops who are actually so elected in some at least of the non-established Anglican Churches outside England. At the same time I strongly feel that the devolution of certain powers of detailed regulation upon a more distinctively Church body would increase spiritual independence and spiritual efficiency. Uncompromising opposition to such a reform will, I believe, involve either the stagnation which must result from the continued use of obsolete formularies and the like, or a progress effected by illegal action, which means a continuance or an increase of the present anarchy. The result in either case must be that Disestablishment which, if it came at all quickly, would put an end to all our hopes for a Church more truly national than any which now exists, because more tolerant of progressive thought, more representative of the higher religious mind of the nation, more capable of adapting itself to the changing needs of a rapidly changing world.

THE CHURCH AND THE CHURCHES.

By CYRIL NORWOOD, D.Litt., Master of Marlborough College.

"I believe in the Holy Catholic Church." What do we mean when we say this? Most of us would say, I think, that we mean the Church whose whole life is in Christ, founded by Him, inspired by Him, sustained by Him, imperfect as yet, but destined to be "His body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." It shall be universal: it shall be of one mind: it shall include all diversities in a single complex activity. Therein all they that confess Christ's holy Name shall agree in the truth of His holy Word, and live in unity and godly love. That unity shall be spiritual, and incapable of division, and all its activities shall be marked by fellowship, co-operation, a common life.

Like Plato's city, it exists in idea only, nor is it anywhere on earth; its pattern is laid up in heaven, and our only comfort is that we can say with Socrates that whether it exists or ever will exist in fact is no matter, for we can live after the manner of this city, having nothing to do with any other. But if we do say so, we cannot be content with things as they are: we cannot be content to have the old eulogy "See how these Christians love one another" flung back ever as a taunt in our faces: we cannot pay lip-service only. And if we try to do more, if we try to hold out the hand of fellowship this way or that, we are either repelled with scorn or assailed as traitors by those who in fact, whatever their theory may be, mean by the Church Universal, a world converted into exact conformity with themselves.

But if there are in the Churches strong forces which make for division, narrowness, and exclusiveness, there are also, I believe, forces which will ultimately prove stronger and which make for unity and fellowship. If there are many who, when a clergyman of the Established Church preaches from a Nonconformist pulpit, cry out that the garment of Christ is rent, the fact remains that there are found clergymen who do so preach, and there will be found continually more. If there are Bishops who excommunicate when their brethren join with Nonconformists to seal a conference of unity by a celebration

of the Sacrament of Love, there are other Bishops who partake gladly of such a communion. And meantime there stand outside the Churches a great company of men and women, some indifferent, some curious, some contemptuous, to whom all this grows more and more unmeaning. For they know that God, if He be God, must be Universal: they are profoundly convinced that what matters is the life lived, and not the particular shade of creed recited: and they are waiting until the Churches become less ignorant and less narrow before they resume their membership. But I do not think that they are outside the Church, nor are they necessarily far from the kingdom of Heaven.

It is not hard to see what has laid this dead hand upon the Church, and rendered permanent these divisions. It is in brief the spirit of institutionalism, of ecclesiasticism. It is not questions of conduct or controversies of ethics, or for that matter differences of creed, that have torn us apart one quarter as much as divergencies of ritual and quarrels about organization. I speak among those who know, and I am not going to spend my short time in tracing the schism of East from West, of ourselves from Rome, of Nonconformity from ourselves, or all the various Protestant bodies from Rome and from one another. I think that your reading will bear me out when I say that in the main differences of usage have counted for much, and not differences as to the essential teaching of Christ. *He* sought to found a living and a developing society: but His followers refusing the gift of the Holy Spirit, or at least seeking to confine it within even narrower channels, have sought to bind and to fix by institution and by dogma, until mint and anise and cummin have taken the place of the weightier matters of the law—justice and mercy and faith. And so there have come about rendings and schism, and now each part is convinced of its own infallibility. The Greek Church claims that they alone are orthodox, and the Roman Church offers no parley, but claims abject surrender. And there are those among ourselves to whom the institutions and organisations of the Church are everything, and who take their stand with the others, confounding unity with uniformity, and repeating their watchword *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*.

"Our fathers worshipped in this mountain: and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."

Jesus said unto her, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father."

And indeed the hour cometh, and is now come. The writing on the wall: the *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin* of the old order is written in blood across Europe. As this great war rolls on into its fourth year, the issues have become clearer, and we see that it is not a question whether Russia or Austria shall dominate in the Balkans, whether Germany shall rule from Berlin to Bagdad, or whether the Teuton shall dominate the world's trade. But it is a question whether any peoples shall be free, whether authority shall dominate in all or freedom, whether the world shall be safe for democracy. That position which the Kaiser seeks in the material world Rome arrogates to itself in the spiritual. Hohenzollern and Pope are alike possessed by the will to power, and each alike seeks to impose that will by means of a splendidly organised machine, wherein there is much efficiency, but no freedom for any human spirit. And it is as certain as I am standing here that Europe will never be enslaved by the one, nor the Church which Jesus Christ founded by the other.

When I speak of Germany and of Rome, I mean that claim to universal control on behalf of a man-made organisation which is found in other places than Rome and Germany, though in a smaller and less menacing degree. It is this spirit which has been fatal to the unity of the Church. As each such organisation grows, prospers, and extends, the original purpose tends to be lost, the machine itself takes its place, and authority reigns supreme. Individual judgment must be surrendered, reform must be resisted, experiment stifled, the anomalies destroyed: truth and right cease to be the standards of judgment, and expediency comes in their stead. When Manning said that to bring theology before the bar of history was to commit treason against the authority of the Church, he was not, if you look below the surface, animated by so very different a spirit from that which filled Bethmann-Hollweg when he referred to the treaty guaranteeing Belgian neutrality

as a scrap of paper, for both were thinking first and foremost of the interests of their machine, of their organisation, as the final standard of value.

The war goes on: democracy and human freedom are winning. We have seen autocracy swept from Russia with results which will probably make themselves felt within very few generations in the Greek Church: we know at any rate that there is set loose in Russia a great stream of brotherhood which has only run in shallow and impeded courses in Western Europe. We have seen the great democracy of the Western Hemisphere drawn against their preconceptions of neutrality to fight on our side. We have seen Germany itself driven to flirt with its foe, and to pretend to accept democracy as a welcome visitor within its gates. When the war is won, we envisage a Europe that will consist of many nationalities, each endowed with its right to free development, each contributing to the good of the whole, each respecting its neighbour in free intercourse.

We have seen too, all the world will have seen, the failure of organised Christianity to meet and avert the crisis. The occupant of St. Peter's chair, vice-gerent of Christ upon earth is unable to judge a plain moral question. He does not judge impartially because he does not judge at all. You see "a pope must hold by popes a little"

— "also he must not
Love truth too dangerously, but prefer
'The interests of the Church' (because a blot
Is better than a rent in miniver)."

And in all the national Churches of Europe we cannot but be aware that they were of little service in the hour when the storm broke because for so long they had been setting the institution first and the life that Christ willed to be lived second, and placing safe and correct opinion before right doing. For them "whatever is is right," as long as it is kept what it is: they could be relied upon to give their blessing to the accomplished fact and to the established order. Therefore in this conspiracy against the world their attitude was discounted beforehand; and the Germans knew that at the bottom and in its inmost fibres organised Christianity as represented by Rome must be on their side.

Finally, at the end of this war, we of the English-speaking races, and indeed the whole world, will have seen an impressive example of unity of a very different type, a unity which is not of the machine but of the spirit. The British Empire so called was so loosely compacted and so utterly heterogeneous that it was thought by the devotees of uniformity and of organisation that at the least severity of strain it must certainly fly asunder. Money and secret agencies were freely employed to accelerate that result, but at once there was made manifest the very opposite, a spiritual unity issuing in action, which has not failed or tired even in this fourth year of war. Moreover, this common unity of spirit was of strength to bring into the conflict side by side with us a republic of many diverse national strains, just because it stands for the same ideal of freedom and self-development. So true it is that ye shall know them by their fruits: so strong is the bond of unity when it means devotion to the same ideal coupled with freedom of interpretation and self-development.

Bergson was not so wrong when he envisaged the struggle as that of machinery against life, and surely when the lesson is driven deep into the conscience of Europe as it will be by the experience of this war from which no people has escaped, when democracy is the accepted form of government, and the right of multitudes to self-determination is guaranteed, it cannot escape the notice of the Churches that things are changed. It cannot be that modern Europe will go one way, and the Churches another: or if it be that some will emerge from this war, having heard nothing and having forgotten nothing, we may be confident that God will have numbered their kingdom and finished it. This is the way which the world is going, this is the path along which the human spirit must progress, and if the organised Churches do not follow in the same spirit of freedom and fellowship, so much the worse for them as institutions. They will be left as outworn shells.

We are so absorbed in the Church of England in our own immediate environment and in our own controversies, and the Church of Rome, which is our immediate neighbour, looms so large, and remains so unchanged and so intransigent, that we

are apt not to realise that development for a long time past has been all in this direction.

Counting heads is of course no argument, but there seems to be no doubt that while the Churches, which stand for uniformity and rigid institutionalism, and refuse negotiation, are going forward with comparative slowness, those of the Reformed towns which, whatever their faults in practice, are capable of co-operation and fellowship have steadily advanced. This process can only be immensely accelerated by the war. If "Wait and See" was ever a wise policy, it is a wise policy now. We need not waste our patience and our labour in reasoning with those who believe in a strict Apostolic succession as the necessary vehicle of mechanically-transmitted grace, nor need we continue to think that we shall solve the problems of our disunion by inducing all other Christians to take the same view as we do. The teaching of the first few centuries of the early Church. We shall move naturally, for we shall be carried by the spirit of the new age to the feet of Christ, both to realise that suffering and sacrifice come all our gain, and that not even one that saith unto Him "Lord, Lord," shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that "doeth the will of the Father which is in heaven." In the Church of our vision Jesus will reign, and not the Jesuits. In the near coming years the ordinary man and woman will be saying what Mrs. Browning, in the generous indignation of a poetic heart said more than a generation ago:—

"What *are* these Churches? The old temple-wall
Doth overlook them juggling with the sleight
Of surplice, candlestick and altar-pall;
East Church and west Church, aye, north Church and south,
Rome's Church and England's—let them all repent,
And make concordats 'twixt their soul and mouth,
Succeed St. Paul by working at the text,
Become infallible guides by speaking truth,
And excommunicate their pride that bent
And crumpled the souls of men——."

Prof. Kirsopp Lake in his book *The Stewardship of Faith* has written:—

"Christianity has to face and accept the fact that there is no longer a Church but a collection of Churches. It is impossible to undo what has been done."

True—but is there not behind this that very natural conception of the Church as something uniform which I am suggesting is not the sound view? He goes on to say that Christianity is not a garment, something dead that is torn, but a living organism, and that in the organic world schism or secession is the recognised means of perpetuating life. I should not be inclined to press the analogy far, since such organisms reproduce others like themselves. But Rome would hardly recognise Calvinism as a legitimate issue of the same organic fibre. No, metaphors are never safe. I suggest rather that just as in the Father's house there are many mansions, so in the Church there are and must be many Churches. Each nationality comes laden with its special gift to contribute to the common stock of civilised man, and each Church has its special testimony to bear to make up the common witness, its own special experience to proclaim. It is but to carry further the teaching of St. Paul, to make explicit what is implicit, perhaps, in the spirit of his reasoning. He could not foresee the twentieth century, nor know the witness which the Holy Spirit has borne to the labours of many schismatic Churches. And so, as he said of individuals, so may we say of the Churches.

“There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.”

And again, later, in the same passage:—

“As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ: For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.”

For it is the one Spirit and the one Christ that give the unity and build out of the churches the Church; and the proof of that unity should be fellowship and willingness to co-operate. If any one says this is vague talk, and you would admit to fellowship any infinitesimal sects, however extreme, however heretical, however narrow, I would say, better so than to show hostility and intolerance. For the counsel of Gamaliel is the only wise policy in dealing with new movements in the religious life. If the work is of men it will come to nought, but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it. It is the same advice as our

Lord would have given, and indeed did give, when He ordained that even the tares should be left until the harvest.

I believe that if this were conceded, all parties would find themselves in a position to learn each from the others, and that it would cease to be mere empty words when we say that while Greek, Roman, and Anglican Catholics have many concessions that they must make to the Protestants, yet the Protestants have a lot to learn from the Catholics. The Rev. A. E. J. Rawlinson says, in *Foundations*:—

“Those of the Pope must learn to appreciate and value the Methodist prayer meeting, the Puritan in his turn must learn to worship with insight and devout intelligence in St. Peter’s at High Mass.”

I believe this to be sound and true, but it is no good to talk about it until both sides are ready to admit that the other may be blest by the Holy Spirit and may be living branches of the Vine, true members of the Body of Christ. And at present the absolute refusal to accept the position of fellowship comes mainly from one side. I have given my reasons for believing that this is the losing side, and therefore the best thing that can be done is to spread the idea of fellowship; to press the rôle of unity, to get the conception of its possibility and its reality into everyone’s mind, and to take every opportunity that can conveniently come our way to perform acts of inter-communion and co-operation. I do not believe that we shall advance far along the path of compromise, however carefully this may be elaborated. That is simply an attempt, praiseworthy enough in itself, to get back to uniformity and a possible orthodoxy, and it is a road which has no end and which will not satisfy any wayfarer. We want not this, but we want all of us rather a change of mind, a difference of outlook. Part of that change of mind was put shortly in *Faith and Fear* by the Rev. C. H. Matthews, when he said:—

“Our trouble seems to be that we have lost all sense of the Gospel values, and have established for them a whole scheme of erroneous ecclesiastical values. These have become so conventional that we simply take them for granted, and never take time to test them by the standards of the Gospel.”

And the other part of it is that we should be ready to respect other men’s consciences in a far different spirit, and not only fearlessly insist upon what we have found to be true ourselves, but also honestly accept and respect what others

find to be true, even though where we do not ourselves quite sympathise with it or fully understand it.

There are plenty of encouraging signs. Long ago Bishop Westcott thought and said that the forces making for unity would make themselves first felt from the circumference. In the mission-field the divisions and prejudices of the Churches must needs be ridiculous, and their mutual animosities destructive of their own works. So it is all to the good that both in Canada and Manitoba there have been practical attempts to draw together between the Episcopalian and the Presbyterian Churches. It is all to the good that the American Episcopal Church, which is free of much of the mediaeval burden that we carry, has been able to organise its "Joint Commission for a World Conference on Faith and Order." It began before the war, and I believe it will find that the war is smoothing difficulties from its path. In India in 1912 the missionaries of all the Churches with Protestant sympathies conferred; in 1913 there was the China National Conference at Shanghai. Who need recount the story of those pioneers of unity at Kikuyu in Africa, that land which we found barbarous, but have made Zanzibarbarous? They can well say *Quae regio in terris nostri non plena laboris*, and through their actions all regions are full too of hope. At the beginning of the century in Scotland the two great Presbyterian Churches combined. There is a further movement to combine with the Established Church of Scotland. The Nonconformist bodies are seeking to draw together both at home and abroad, and we are witnessing the steady advance of the Rev. J. H. Shakespeare's movement for the United Free Church of England. And only on the 19th of last month the Bishop of London held out the olive branch to the Wesleyans, and his appeal could not have been made so openly had not negotiations been carried on beforehand, and terms of unity discussed. Does not even so hasty a review of the facts of the last twenty years, incomplete as it is, give the fullest grounds for hope for the future, and indicate the many directions in which you will find the sources of streams making for unity?

"the forward-creeping tides
Begin to foam, and we to draw
From deep to deep."

There must always be two great psychological types among Christians, those who are impressed by order and by the strong tie that draws us to worship where our fathers did, and those for whom the religious life is primarily the adventure of the individual soul, and for whom the wind bloweth where it listeth. There are set in the Church "first apostles; secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers," and they are all needed: in the past this need has been interpreted too narrowly. It would be a great step forward in the direction of the unification of the Church, it would be a great step forward in the direction of increased efficiency, if we could establish preaching orders. As things are now, the practical clergy are expected to be apostles, prophets, teachers, workers of miracles, and healers all in one, and human nature, let alone the training of ordinands, does not suffice for the quintuple burden. But establish your preaching orders, even in the partial way adumbrated by the Bishop of London in speaking to the Wesleyan Conference, and you find room by comprehension and not by compromise for much of that free prophetic spirit which at present finds its sphere of activity not only outside our own Church of England, but often outside all the Churches.

The forces that make for unity are also forces which make for restatement and for simplification. Our need is to go back behind the first ages of the Christian Church to the Author and Founder Himself, and the further we go back the less there is to separate us. The Fatherhood of God, our redemption through Christ, goodness through the Holy Ghost, and the universal brotherhood of all men—this is the quadrilateral of the Church in the twentieth century. These are the first things which Christians, in the new age which is at hand, must put first. And with this the Churches must open wide the gates to new knowledge, and keep themselves ready for the adjustment and growth that are ever the mark of life. We shall all of us have to abandon some professions, and watch with natural regret, the loss, decline, and disappearance of beliefs and organizations that have been of value once. But we shall grow towards unity, we shall grow in the knowledge of God.

"I say that man was made to grow, not stop;
That help, he needed once, and needs no more,
Having grown but an inch by, is withdrawn;
For he hath new needs, and new helps to these.
This imports solely, man shall mount on each
New height in view: the help whereby he mounts,
The ladder-rung his foot has left, may fall,
Since all things suffer change save God the Truth."

PSYCHOLOGY AND THE SACRAMENTS.

By the Rev. C. F. RUSSELL, M.A., Assistant Master at Harrow ;
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It is one of the discoveries of modern times that when an unfamiliar event, or, indeed, often for that matter a familiar one, is presented to an observer, it is not the easiest thing in the world for him to say exactly what it is that has taken place. What he describes is what he *believes* to have taken place, and that may be a very different thing. Let me give you an illustration in regard to which there can be no disagreement. Suppose that a child comes and tells me that he saw a conjurer produce a watch from a pocket of his which he knew to be empty. Well, of course I have not got first-hand knowledge of what happened at all; but, even at second-hand, what is it that I know? Not that the conjurer produced the watch from the pocket, but that the child thought he did. And unless my subsequent reflections take account of this difference, they are not likely to be very fruitful in enabling me to reproduce the performance.

Now the illustration is not in any way invalidated through being concerned with a conjurer, whose deliberate intention was to produce a false impression. That feature, of course, makes the conclusion more obvious, but it is equally true in other cases. Personal testimony, even when it is of the most trustworthy kind, does not tell us anything directly of the fact testified to, except the impression which it produced upon the witness. Certainly, that may be a very useful piece of information, and in most cases it may be possible to deduce a great deal, or even everything that we need to know, about the event itself. Usually we shall assume, and shall be justified in assuming, that the event actually took place as it is described. But none the less our knowledge of it is a deduction, and now and then occasions arise when it is important to remember that this is so.

You will agree with me that this is a modern discovery when I remind you how, not so very long ago, it was thought that we

were compelled to choose between two conclusions, and two only, in regard to the miraculous events recorded in the Bible: either they took place exactly as they were narrated, or else we were in the presence of untrustworthy witnesses. Either the stories were literally true, or else they were invented. But we have found that there is a third alternative. Perhaps they were not literally true, and yet were believed to be true by those who wrote them. And the question which we put to ourselves now is something of this sort: "Something happened, and this writer has told me what he thought it was; how would it have seemed to me?"

But this is not the only change which has taken place in the aspect of the miracles controversy as a consequence of the increased attention which is being given to the study of the human mind. We have become aware of facts which our ancestors hardly suspected, facts about the influence of a man's mind upon his body, about the influence of one mind upon others, and so, as a necessary consequence of these two, about the influence of one man's mind upon another man's body. Methods based upon these facts have taken their place in the regular equipment of the twentieth century physician. And their bearing upon many of the miracles of the New Testament is plain.

I do not forget that the subject of this paper is the Sacraments; but I have referred to the familiar question of miracles deliberately. For I want to call your attention to the way in which our attitude to that controversy has been altered by what I may call the psychologising of theology. Let me deal with this for a moment or two longer, and try to state briefly what has happened.

On the one side there are those who accept the narratives without discriminating between them, and regard them all as miracles in the old sense, that is to say, as involving the interference with natural law by a supernatural power. Let me call them the supernaturalists,—a name which is in many respects most unsatisfactory, as it seems to imply that those who disagree with them deny the reality of the supernatural, than which nothing can be more untrue; but here, at any rate, the name will not be misunderstood. Opposed, then, to the supernaturalists, there are those who reject all the narratives with the

same lack of discrimination; doing so because while, like the others, they understand by "miracle" an act of interference with natural law by a supernatural power, yet, unlike them, they do not believe that such acts have ever taken place. I will call these people naturalists, a name which, I must admit, is quite as unsatisfactory as the first. Now each of these two positions has its strong points as well as its weak ones. The strength of the supernaturalists' position is that it tries to do justice to the undeniable fact that the biblical writers were obviously honest and single-minded men, to whom the idea of fraud, whether pious or impious, would have been abhorrent. The strength of the naturalists' position is that it tries to do justice to what appears to most of us to be an equally undeniable fact,—the uniformity of nature; a fact which has not merely a scientific but also a profound theological significance. And on the other hand, each side fails to do justice to the fact whose recognition constitutes the strength of its opponents. Yet both facts clamour for recognition; and no solution can possibly be accepted as final which ignores either the one or the other. It seems to me that the attempt to understand the narratives from the point of view of modern psychology provides a solution which may reasonably claim that it does justice to both these facts. It accepts many of the narratives as literally true except in so far as they attempt to explain as well as describe; a typical instance of such cases being the healing of the epileptic boy. It bows to the belief in uniformity as the principle of the Divine action in the world, when it discriminates such narratives and others of a similar kind from others like the walking on the sea and the feeding of the five thousand. And thirdly,—and this I regard as perhaps the most important thing of all,—it avoids the necessity of impugning the honesty of the writers even in the case of those narratives which it feels unable to accept; for it can point out, from the psychological standpoint, that so long as the naturalness of the one kind of miracle was not, and indeed could not have been, recognised, it was inevitable that narratives of the other kind, which to us are so different but to them must have seemed neither more nor less wonderful, should have found ready credence. The psychologists, then, I venture to say, are the harmonisers between the supernaturalists and the naturalists.

It is not only in the field of biblical criticism that the recognition of psychological facts has been of value. At the present time, ethical, economic, political theories are all being psychologised. We are familiar with the statement that many of the miscalculations which Germany has made during the last three years are due to the fact that the German theory of international relationships is backward in this respect. And in theology, we may expect to find that this same recognition of psychological facts will help us in other matters besides miracles. You have long ago seen, I am sure, what I am trying to argue in this paper,—that in regard to the Sacraments it will again be found to be the case that the psychologists are the harmonisers between the supernaturalists and the naturalists.

The word "sacrament" has travelled a long way from its original meaning. In its modern theological use as referring to a rite of the Church, it denotes a "sign" which is in some way "effective." But, even so, it is capable of a wider application than to the two "Sacraments of the Gospel;" and those who would so apply it to-day are, of course, only following the example of Augustine. Outside the range of special ecclesiastical rites, too, we are all familiar with such statements as that "all life is sacramental;" and while, in this paper, I must obviously confine myself mainly to the two great Sacraments, yet it will be useful, I think, to illustrate particular aspects of these by references to others which are Sacraments only in this widest sense. I will speak first of the Holy Communion.

The Eucharist is an "effective sign;" what, then, does it effect? The various answers which might be given to this question by men of different types would certainly include the following: (1) as regards God, it is a presentation to Him of the one perfect and sufficient sacrifice of Christ for human sins; (2) as regards the Church, it is a proclamation of that sacrifice to the world, a "showing forth" of the Lord's death; and it also maintains the fellowship of Christians with one another; (3) as regards the individual, it is a sustaining of the spiritual life by feeding upon Christ. As to the second, that is to say, the Eucharist as preaching the Gospel message to the world and as realising the unity of the Church, there is little disagreement; it is round the first and third that controversy rages.

And in order that we may understand the view of those whom I will once more call the supernaturalists, I must remind you of one or two details in connexion with the doctrine of sacrifice as it seems to have been held in earlier times.

The most primitive forms of social organisation were the family and the tribe; and any such unit, in rivalry with other similar units, was bound to stand or fall according to the strength of the feeling of solidarity within it. Friendship and enmity were tribal affairs; which meant, in the minds of the people concerned, that they were determined by the blood which flowed in their veins, for in theory the members of a tribe were all blood-relations. We know that compacts of friendship between two distinct tribes were sometimes ratified by an actual comingling of their blood, in the persons of representative members. It was natural, therefore, that the relation between a tribe and its god should be based upon the same ideas. The god was a member of the tribe, of one blood with them; the blood of those sacred animals in which he manifested himself was spilt to ensure his presence, and to confirm or re-establish the bond which bound him to the community; common meals, of which not only every member of the tribe was required to partake, but in which the god also himself was supposed to share, formed part of the ritual of worship; the flesh of the same sacred animals, in whose veins the divine blood circulated, was sacramentally eaten.

When we hear of beliefs and practices like these, we feel that we cannot admit as true such views as those about the manifestation of the god in special animals, or the eating of him by his worshippers; but none the less the experience to which they led those who held them was of real religious value. Those men were feeling after God, if haply they might find Him. The reality of their experience did not depend upon the validity of the conceptions by which they tried to explain them. We can accept the experience without accepting the explanation; we can reject the explanation without rejecting the experience.

Now views of this sort have been part of the general heritage of mankind; and I do not see how we can deny their influence upon Christians. It has been the experience of Christians that

in a certain sacred rite they have realised in a special way the fact of their communion with God in Christ, and the doctrine of the Eucharist has arisen out of an attempt to explain how this could be. It was almost inevitable that such an attempt at explanation should have looked, at first, to the outward rather than the inward features of the ceremony, that the experiences should have been interpreted on quasi-materialistic rather than on mental and spiritual lines. Hence, while admitting the necessity of faith in the recipient, men have been eager also to attribute an intrinsic virtue to the elements of bread and wine, to the act of consecration, to the sacred office of the minister. They have even spoken of the consecrated elements as being the veritable flesh and blood of God. Round such central thoughts as these have naturally fastened others like the necessity of fasting reception, and the importance of the ablutions, even to the point of the priest's drinking the water in which the purificators have been washed. In fact, the phrase "Sacramental Christianity" has come to mean—not simply a Christianity which values the Sacraments for the sake of the spiritual experiences of which they are in some way the vehicle, but—a Christianity which is pledged to a particular—and, as it seems to me, a rather barbarous and unintelligent—theory of the way in which they work. Meanwhile, along with that theory, and even where it has been discarded, there has often gone a view about the nature of the Atonement, and the need for commemorating before God the sacrifice on Calvary, which seems to many people, equally with the other, to be a survival of pagan belief, and utterly out of harmony with the will and character of God, as they have been revealed by Christ.

I referred earlier in this paper to the two broadly opposed views to one or other of which men have tended in relation to the controversy about miracles, those of total acceptance and total rejection. I think that in regard to the Holy Communion much the same may be observed. There are a large number of people who think that their conviction of the real efficacy of Sacraments requires them to maintain some such theory about them as that of which I have spoken, a theory in which the external part of the rite bears an undue weight of responsibility.

and they think that they are compelled to this course by respect for the authority of the Church which has gradually elaborated the Eucharistic doctrine of the past. And there are others who, in their revolt from such theories about the Sacraments, have thought themselves compelled to deny a great part of their efficacy. It seems to me that modern churchmen cannot adopt either of these positions in its completeness. They will discriminate between the fact and the attempted explanation. Like the supernaturalists, they will acknowledge that the Sacraments are not merely signs but effective signs; yet, like the naturalists, they will have nothing to do with many of the theories which have been put forward to explain their power, while at the same time they will claim that the growth of those theories is historically and psychologically intelligible.

From both wings,—the extreme right and the extreme left,—there will come, of course, a challenge to justify this position by stating an alternative theory, and somehow the challenge must be met. Let us take the miracles controversy as our guide once more. How have we been able to retain our belief in many of the Gospel miracles while yet we claim that we yield to none in our regard for the supremacy of natural law? Is it not, as I have said already, because of our slowly gathering knowledge of what we call mental phenomena? Here, surely, is the hint for our solution of sacramental controversies too. The Holy Communion is, above everything else, a corporate rite. (The recovery of this aspect of the service is what gives value to the attempt that is being made to-day to establish its position as the principal service of Sunday.) And, as a corporate act of the Church, the Communion necessarily effects in the individual much more than can be explained as due merely to his own faith. It enables him, as no private act of devotion can do so easily, to realise the eternal presence of Christ with His Church and with all its members, and thereby to enrich his spiritual life by an experience which may truly be described as feeding upon Him. I need not go more fully into detail, but I hope I have said enough to justify my assertion just now that the psychologists are the harmonisers between the supernaturalists and the naturalists.

The problems connected with Baptism are capable of receiving a similar solution. We can reject all explanations which border on the magical, all those which suggest difficulties about the fate of the unbaptised, and yet believe that the rite in its normal and complete form—that is to say, as administered to the adult—actually effects, and not merely synchronises with, a profound spiritual experience. It is impossible, or so it seems to me, to contemplate such a case of baptism without seeing that it brings to bear upon the individual the spiritual influence of the Christian community in a way which must be extraordinarily potent for his development. The course of preparation has brought the metal of his soul to a white heat, and the crisis of baptism is the occasion when the united force of his fellow-believers stamps it with an indelible impression. Among the early Christians, as on the Mission field to-day, the significance of the rite must have been tremendous. What wonder if they attributed the effect to the mystical virtue of the water, and spoke of the Church as cleansed by the washing of water, saved by the washing of regeneration? But it is not the water, nor the baptismal formula, which makes the Sacrament, but the whole complete act of the Church. Is not the psychologist the harmoniser again?

At this point I should like to remind you that in the case of those rites which are sacraments in the wider sense, it is still true that their effect is psychological. Consider, for instance, the ceremony of coronation, the sacrament of kingship. Some people—the supernaturalists again, if you like—have supposed that it is the coronation which gives his authority to a new king; they would not agree that that authority is broad-based upon the people's will. And others would tell us that the ceremony is a useless one; it makes no real difference; it had much better be abolished. But the whole truth is not with either view. The coronation does make a difference; but its effect is upon men's minds,—the minds of both king and people. In the sovereign it cannot fail to strengthen the devotion with which he gives himself to his lofty task; and in his subjects it stirs and deepens the passion of their loyalty.

Or, to turn from great occasions to small, why is it that a parochial tea or a club dinner may be called a sacrament of

fellowship? There is no magic in them, no working of purely mechanical effects; it is open to anyone to assert that if he wants to feel brotherly he can do so when he is alone in his study or engaged upon his daily round of work. Yet no one, I suppose, would deny that club dinners and parish teas may, and often do, increase the sentiment of friendliness among those who take part in them. And if we inquire how they do so, the answer is—not that there is some peculiar virtue in the food that is eaten in the cake or the asparagus, but—that their working is due to the secret yet normal influence of individual human minds upon one another, and of the circumstances upon them all.

But of all the sacraments which play their part in ordinary life, there is none the consideration of which is so suggestive as human speech. I will refer to it now for one purpose only: it will help us to understand in what sense the great Sacraments of the Church can be said to be “necessary.” It is the power of speech that has made it possible for mankind to develop intelligence; and if an entire community should lose that power, its intellectual capacity would rapidly dwindle. Yet there are deaf-mutes whose intelligence is normal; that, however, is only because they are members of a community which is still as a whole capable of speech. We shall say, then, that speech is generally, but not individually, necessary for intelligence; and I believe that we must make the same distinction in speaking of the Gospel Sacraments. They may, indeed, be indispensable for the well-being, the salvation, of the Christian fellowship, since human nature is what it is; but there are innumerable instances to prove that we cannot make the same assertion in the case of each individual believer. Still more rigidly must we abstain from any attempt to fix a normal standard as to the frequency of participation. To refer once more to my illustration, it may be true that speech is a *sine qua non* for intelligence in mankind; but he would be a foolish man who should assume that the degree of a man’s volubility was in any way an index to his mental development.

Let me, in conclusion, ask you to consider how this view of sacramental efficacy bears on the question of validity,—a question which takes a specially prominent place in our

thoughts to-day because of its relation to the problem of re-union. It is a curious fact that in the Anglican Articles the order in which we are accustomed to think of Church and Sacraments is reversed. It is not the Church which guarantees the validity of the Sacraments, but the Sacraments which authenticate the Church. "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which . . . the sacraments be duly administered." Probably nothing can be argued from so slender a distinction, but, none the less, it may remind us of what, indeed, we all admit, that the Sacraments ought to be the bonds of Christian unity, and not, as they so often are, the grounds and occasions of division. How, then, ought the members of different Churches to regard one another's Sacraments at the present time?

If you agree with me that the working of the ceremony is psychological, you will be ready to go with me still further, and say that all Sacraments are valid in which the necessary psychological conditions are present. Undoubtedly, one such condition is that the individual recipient should be in sympathy with the other members of the worshipping community. And that means that validity is a relative matter. The same rite may be valid as a Sacrament for one person, and invalid for another. The attitude of each will determine, in any particular case, the question, not of absolute validity, but of validity for himself. If he is convinced that a particular order and succession of ministry is essential to a true Sacrament, then for him the Communion of Nonconformists is necessarily invalid; it does not avail; for he has shut the door of his heart against the grace that is ready to enter it. But if, instead, he regards the Eucharist as the corporate act of a Church whose organisation is not eternally prescribed by divine authority, such a Communion not only appears to him to be, but actually is, a valid Sacrament. And if this conclusion seems disappointing and unsatisfactory for the immediate present, at any rate I would suggest to you that the outlook for the future becomes more and more hopeful as the psychological interpretation of the Sacraments gains wider acceptance.

THE SYMBOLISMS OF THE EUCHARIST.

By the Rev. JOHN GAMBLE, B.D.

None of the great Christian Institutions has been more vividly illuminated by recent research than the Eucharist. Our view of its origin has been affected by both the discussions which stand out conspicuous in the recent study of the New Testament. It is involved in the apocalyptic problem as it has been called. For plainly the last Supper of the Lord was an anticipation or prophecy of the new wine of the kingdom of God. Our conception of the Eucharist as it had come to be after the first few years of the Church's existence must also be coloured by our knowledge of the Greek mystery religions and their influence upon the Church's worship. It can hardly be doubted that St. Paul's language about the Eucharist was shaped to some extent, although unconsciously, by the mystical ideas prevalent in the Greek world of his time.

It has now become impossible to maintain the supposition which was for so long the accredited one throughout Reformed Christendom that the intention of the Saviour in pronouncing the bread and wine to be His body and His blood was to institute a symbolical commemoration of His death, to be observed by His disciples until He should appear once more in their midst. The text of the words of institution, as they are called, does not allow us to presume such an intention on His part. Indeed the textual evidence favours the supposition that every meal of which the disciples partook in common was to be to them a Eucharist, an assurance of the Master's unseen presence and a promise of His return. Such a supposition is much more in accordance with our general knowledge of the Lord's personality than the belief in the establishment by Him of this or any other positive institution. The greatest originators do not establish institutions. Institutions grow from their words and actions. They themselves do not deliberate nor create any visible organization. No one of us, I presume, imagines that the Saviour even taught His disciples as we teach our pupils. He was not, I mean, consciously or of set purpose

didactic. "What He saw the Father do that He did again. What He heard from the Father that He spoke." In so speaking He taught with wonderful persuasiveness and authority. But He had a loftier purpose even than instruction. The sweetest music made by nature is not conscious of its own sweetness. The bird sings instinctively. The sea draws the pebbles after it, as it recedes, because it must. So the Great Founder fulfilled His mission and accomplished His work. The Church and its institutions were created by Him. But He did not set Himself to create them.

Thus the last Supper presents itself to us, not as an isolated feast, but as one of many common meals of which the Master had been in the habit of partaking with His disciples. It speaks to us of a custom which perhaps He had adopted rather than instituted, which, in any case, reaches back into the ages before He came, and, indeed, to the very beginnings of human intercourse and fellowship. The last of these social repasts He charged with His own feelings of mingled joy and sadness as He sat down to meat with the twelve.¹

On the one hand the dark shadow of impending separation and calamity fell upon the table. On the other hand was His assured confidence that, whether by death or life, the Kingdom would come, and God's Will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Possessed by this exalted consciousness He desired to unite His disciples with Him in intimate spiritual fellowship, during the interval, short or long, which might separate hope from fruition and faith from sight. So, while they ate the bread and drank the wine, He assured them that it was upon Him they were really feeding, that the bread was His body, and the wine the blood with which He was about to ratify the new covenant between earth and heaven.

¹ It is difficult to suppose that our Lord's last supper can have been the Jewish Passover meal. There is no mention of a lamb on the table at the last Supper. It seems, moreover, very unlikely that the Jewish authorities should have spent the most sacred night of their year in the quasi-legal proceedings which led up to the Crucifixion. There thus seems to be an intrinsic probability in St. John's separation of the Supper from the Passover meal. See John xiii. 29, xviii. 28.

² The covenant to be ratified by Christ was, on the one side, the Divine promise to establish the Messianic Kingdom, and on the other, the promise to be given by the disciples that they would wait for the Kingdom in fidelity and mutual love. The covenant was "new" in contrast with that described in Exodus xxiv., when Moses read "the book of the Covenant" in the audience of the people, and they said, "All that the Lord hath

The transition from "the breaking of bread" of the first chapter of Acts to the ecclesiastical Eucharist is very obscure. It is, however, plain that already to St. Paul the bread and wine of the Christian Feast had come to be the veils of a spiritual presence as well as the memorials of a by-gone sacrifice. He and his fellow believers, no less than the fathers in the wilderness, drank of a spiritual rock that followed them, "and that rock was Christ." "The cup of blessing which we bless is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break is it not a communion of the body of Christ?" This is sacramental language. The sources from which St. Paul derived this mysticism are indeed hidden from us. We know that he did not inherit it from his Jewish ancestors. Nowhere in the Old Testament do you find the devout Jew identifying himself with the object of his worship, surmounting the limits which separate man and God. It is clear, however that the Apostle did do this. He believed that God was in Christ and that Christ was in him. The belief was to him an ever-present consolation and an uplifting hope, and he found the mystic union cemented as well as symbolized in the Eucharistic feast.

Thus the Catholic view of the Eucharist finds stronger support in history than its rivals. The Mass of the Roman Church has better historical credentials than the Zwinglian Commemoration. The Christian disciple seems from an early time to have sought and found in the Eucharistic feast that sense of union with an unseen Divine power which the soldiers of Mithra gained in their mysteries. The belief which gradually hardened into transubstantiation was originally that which prompted the Apostle's confession: "It is not I who live but Christ who liveth in me." It was not to be reminded of something past, but to be raised above the evil world, that the disciple approached the Holy Table. Even as early as the days of Ignatius the bread was regarded as the medicine of immortality, an antidote to protect the soul from the assaults of death.

spoken will we do." The Christian covenant is represented in the Epistle to the Hebrews as being that anticipated by Jeremiah xxxi. 31-34, and as supplanting the Mosaic covenant which "had become old and was nigh unto vanishing away," Hebrews viii. 7-13. The allegiance to which the disciples were pledged did not consist in an obedience to external precepts, but in fidelity to their own dearest hopes and affections. It was the laws of their own hearts they were following in cleaving to Christ and waiting for the Kingdom. Thus loving God they could count upon His love in return and feel assured of His forgiveness.

It would be fruitless to speculate as to the meanings which the multitudes who now join in the Eucharist on an Easter morning find in the sacred feast. But we may safely say that in the minds of many who reflect at all the thought of union with Christ is uppermost. They desire, with more or less of conscious intention, to claim the fulfilment of His promise of spiritual companionship. Their prayer is that they may dwell in Him and He in them. We are the more led to attribute such an intention to them when we observe the increased power which the Eucharist seems to exercise over the troubled and anxious mind. The sacred feast has a double attraction for the sorrowful and the bereaved. I have never doubted that the desire of these worshippers was to overcome death in union with the glorified and deathless Christ.

However this may be we shall agree that the Church possesses in the Eucharist an incomparable instrument for conveying, not merely to the understanding, but to the heart and the imagination, the truth which it is her chief duty to proclaim, that in union with Christ is life eternal.

Let me speak of three important subjects upon which the light of this Christian mystery vividly falls.

(1). The first is personality. When we pray that we may dwell in Christ and He in us, we mean, I would urge, and ought to mean more than that we wish to imitate Him, or to learn of Him, or to display some of His characteristics. The prayer speaks of a state of consciousness in which our ordinary conceptions of personality are exceeded or left behind. We may indeed dismiss the language as merely figurative and pay no further heed to it, but if we attempt to interpret it, it breaks through our customary terminology. Yet we are not without aids towards the intended meaning. The exclamation of the French patriot: "Let my name be tarnished provided that France be free," shows us a man ready to surrender that which gives life, in a large measure, its value for the sake of some cause from which he feels his own future to be inseparable. Such an expression can hardly fail to recall the still greater self-abnegation of the words: "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's shall save it." We shall not understand these words as an injunction

to subordinate this life to another that shall succeed it, to be ready to suffer now that we may rejoice then. The "losing" and the "saving" must of course both be understood as present experiences. The fullest sense I am able to give to the words is to suppose a man ready to part, not only with everything he has but with everything he is, in the confidence that he loses nothing, which, if he knew all, he would desire to keep. Christ uses ordinary phraseology because there is no other He can use. He ventures upon the contradiction involved in supposing that a man could at the same time lose his life and yet preserve it. His meaning, however, is quite plain. The state of mind of him who is willing to surrender everything, even existence for Christ's and the Gospel's sake, is the one which He singles out for praise. He wishes us to think not in the terms of our individual selves but in those larger terms which He offers and illustrates.

Our present terminology, we know, fails us at many points when we apply it to eternal things. When we describe our feelings towards God or His feeling towards us as love, we are using a mere symbol or approximation. When we say that God created the heavens and the earth, what we call creation is an operation or process of which we are able to conceive neither the beginning nor the end.

The human word will not bear the weight of meaning we wish to put upon it. I would urge that personality is another such approximation. God Himself is not a person, as you and I are persons. Personality, when we ascribe it to Him, acquires a significance which breaks through our ordinary conceptions of its meaning. We use the word because we must. But it becomes, thus employed, an admitted symbol. And of this we are vividly reminded when we pray that Christ may dwell in us and we in Him.

(2) The second subject I would place in the light of the Eucharist is gratitude or thankfulness to God. Our Eucharistic office describes itself as a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and throughout, the expression of gratitude keeps sounding like a dominant chord in a piece of music. We lift up our voices with angels and archangels, and with the whole company

of heaven, to give thanks to Him of whose glory we claim that the heaven and the earth are full, and we confess that such gratitude should be our feeling at all times and in all places.

What is the gratitude thus intended and regarded compatible with every earthly situation? We shall not suppose it to be the mere feeling awakened within us when we compare our own wealth, if so it be, with the poverty of others:—

“Not more than others I deserve,
Yet God has given me more,
For I have food while others starve
And beg from door to door.
Lord, I ascribe it to Thy grace
And not to chance as others do,
That I was born of Christian race
And not a heathen or a Jew.”

I do not question the legitimacy of this thanksgiving. Plainly, however, it falls short of Eucharistic thankfulness. For this is felt by those who have little as well as by those who have much, by those upon whom the shadows fall no less than by the prosperous. Indeed, the broad characteristic of the Feast is one in which joy is chastened by sorrow. Christ gives thanks for the bread which is to be broken on the morrow, for the cup which He prays may pass from Him.

Christian gratitude is thus revealed to us as the feeling of those who do not seek for the satisfaction of their own desires but for the fulfilment of the Divine Will. We are reminded of one of the rules made by Descartes for the conduct of his own life when he began his search for truth. He resolved that he would seek happiness rather by moderating his individual wishes than by enlarging his ambitions. It is only when we thus moderate our wishes that Christian gratitude becomes possible to us.

Look at the reverse side of the picture. The ungrateful temper is his who makes exorbitant demands and then, when these demands are, as they must be, unhonoured, gives way to sorrow and bitterness. Thankfulness begins where our legitimate claims, or what we deem such, end. What we think we have a right to we accept as a matter of course. Gratitude thus rises and falls with the sense of our own deserts. It

inconsistent with great individual expectations. So it is possible in every situation. Wordsworth was overcome, as well he might be, by sorrow when he observed how little was often needed to awaken it.

Eucharistic feeling thus submits to imperfect adjustments, and half lights, and disappointing conclusions. It does not expect that the Divine kingdom will ever become a concrete reality either on the earth or in any other state of being imaginable by us. It looks forward to continuous progress, it may be, but it knows that what ought to be will always go beyond what is. The heavenly pattern will not descend to the earth, but will be visible only to those who stand on the Mount of Vision. Entertaining these chastened expectations, it is at liberty to rejoice in the many good things which those who ask for more would disdain. It is content to dwell amidst symbols, shadows, approximations. It acquiesces in imperfect answers because they are often the only ones available. Thus its faith rises above defeats and disappointments, and is able to praise God even from the midst of the fires.

(3) I shall say but little of the last of my three subjects—sacrifice. Christ united His disciples with Himself in the impending sacrifice by pronouncing the bread and the wine to be His body and blood. The Eucharist is thus a speaking emblem of the joy of sacrifice. It tells us by a moving example the meaning of dying to live. We need its witness to remind us that the most effectual sacrifices do not seem to those who make them to be sacrifices at all. There is no mark of painful negation stamped upon them. Just as the most humble people do not know that they are humble, and the pure are unconscious of their purity, so the self-sacrificing spirit knows nothing of the sufferings which others think that it is enduring. St. Paul passed through many hardships. But they did not seem such to him. The hardship would have come had he declined his task. "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." They who follow the Christ with whom they sup in the Eucharistic feast are called upon to share His sacrifice, but the sacrifice to which He invites them, if it brings them the bitterest pain, brings them also the keenest joy.

THE CHURCH AND THE SOCIAL HOPE.

By the Right Rev. Bishop MERCER, D.D.

"We were saved by hope."—*Rom. viii. 24.*

Not long before the outbreak of the war, the *Times* contained a striking article dealing with belief in the possibility of progress.

"An immense hope" (said the writer) "has traversed the world and if it now seems delusive, it is likely to be followed by a despair no less immense."

"For a century or more men's hearts have fed upon the hope that real progress is possible. They have founded their faith in the ultimate righteousness of the universe, and if it crumbles away, what grounds of faith will be left to them?"

This question was poignant at the time it was penned. With what added poignancy does it come to us now, after three years of world-desolating conflict, with still no definite promise of its close, and with a host of momentous complications to be faced when the longed-for peace shall have been righteously established. Look where we will, unrest—deep-seated portentous unrest. What marvel that at a crisis when all the hard-won resources of civilisation are being concentrated on the destruction of human life, when whole nations are plunged into ruin or anarchy, there should be anxious foreboding, and that in many minds the hope of progress should be dimmed.

The outlook is threatening. And yet, as in the case of that ancient civilisation which St. Paul so vividly condemned, a closer study of the conditions discloses the working of social, intellectual, and spiritual forces which more than suffice to abate the pessimistic mood. The war itself, black as is its record, has revealed a reserve of unsuspected qualities and self-sacrificing heroism which, if rightly guided and inspired, might accomplish miracles for human welfare. Our civilisation is not decadent. Under all its imperfections, weaknesses, and miseries, can be discerned a spirit that renews its youth, and wins its way to fuller life.

The signs of the times are paradoxically complex. On the one hand there is a notable deepening of the social consciousness; on the other, strenuous affirmation of the worth and dignity of the individual. We hear on one side a demand for clear reasoning and scientific method: on another a plea for the recognition of those mystical aspects of existence in which reasoned knowledge melts into the formless haze of an unknown Beyond. Radical criticism of the older orthodoxies stands in sharp contrast to an exaltation of unquestioning faith and clear-cut dogma. No one of these conflicting factors is a new thing, peculiar to our age. It is their complementary combination, and their coincidence with a unique upheaval of social forces, that gives them their special character and significance.

All is seeming turmoil and confusion. Can we discern anywhere a co-ordinating principle which gives token of the presence of purpose? What

we drive beneath the surface waves, and feel the grip of the main current, do the restless forces appear to sweep in a definite direction? I venture to think that the master-trend is towards the securing of equality for self-development in and through a more perfect social organisation. Men have always, indeed, been stimulated by a gregarious instinct; but this has been mostly subconscious in its working and capricious in its results. The modern spirit is characterised by a determination to lift this subconscious instinct into the daylight of conscious purpose and definite effort. In other words, it aims at such purposeful guiding of human affairs that society may become a thoroughly healthy organism, in which the whole exists for the sake of the parts, and the parts for the sake of the whole.

Whether I am right or whether I am wrong in thus defining the main characteristic of our *Zeitgeist*, at any rate I am safe in assuming that an effort to secure conditions in which the individual attains to fuller life by being more perfectly socialised is undoubtedly according to the mind of Christ; one which should be welcomed and fostered by His disciples. But when we come to compare the imperial claims of our religion with its actual influence in moulding the great movements of our day, social and intellectual, we are filled with a sense of dissatisfaction almost amounting to despair. Making all due allowance for uninformed and impatient judgments, the facts remain that the great masses of the social democracy ignore the Churches, even when they are not actively hostile to them; and that an increasing number of those who are learning to think seriously and consistently on the problems of existence, are more or less reluctantly driven to shake themselves free from their guidance, even when they do not repudiate and condemn them. The facts are as solid as they are perturbing: not infrequently they are tragic.

"An immense hope has traversed the world." What was its main source? Let Mazzini tell us. I abbreviate the passage.—

"The sky was dark, the heavens void; the peoples agitated or motionless in stupor. Throughout the world was a dull sound of dissolution. He came. The soul most full of love . . . the most deeply inspired by God and the future, that men have yet seen on earth; Jesus. He bent over the corpse of the dead world, and whispered a word of faith. And the dead arose—the world of liberty and equality. From that clay arose the true man, the image of God, the precursor of humanity."

Yes, Mazzini, ablaze with the enthusiasm of humanity, pierces to the central core. Religion, in every age and in every form, has exercised a binding influence, and has been the nursing mother of the social consciousness. But it is the religion of Jesus Christ that has universalised the conception of humanity by spiritualising it, and has kindled the hope that a brotherhood is possible which shall know no bounds of space or time, of race or condition. Yet here, in this twentieth century of the Christian era, there yawns a chasm between the churches and vast sections of the progressive peoples of the civilised world! These communities, organised in the name of Him who had compassion on the multitudes, have no clear message for the toilers, so many of whom have come to see that pious phrases and

delightsome dreams of Paradise are merely soporific, if religion does not find expression in vigorous and systematic action. The Churches, in face of what is going on around them and apart from them, are, indeed, uneasy and perplexed; but they do not allow themselves to be moved by that social faith which works by reform. Hence the alienation of those who want a better world. It was our religion that brought their hopes to the birth; it is our religion that should provide those hopes with a spiritual basis and transfuse them with spiritual power.

Will it be urged that Christians have always inculcated compassion, encouraged habitual almsgiving, supported manifold kinds of philanthropic effort? The fact should, in simple fairness, be recognised by all, whether friends or foes of Christianity. None the less, it must also be conceded that the philanthropy has hitherto tended to stop short at palliatives of evils rather than to seek for causes and for cures. The feeling that prompted it is true and noble so far as it goes. It has achieved partial successes and relieved much want and misery. But it must be expanded and must adopt more fundamental methods if it is to be adequate to the kind of work called for by the new order which advances with strides so startlingly rapid. It must be modified to a degree that almost amounts to a transformation. Are the Churches alive to this need? Broadly speaking, they are apathetic; too often they are reactionary.

Or will it be urged that, so far at any rate as the Oxford Movement is concerned, there has been in our own Communion an awakening of the social consciousness? I freely and thankfully acknowledge that we have here the heart of gold in a revival which has done so much to emphasise and enlarge the corporate aspects of our religion. But alas! the gain is sadly neutralised by a resolve to drag us back to mediaevalism. The Christianising of our sociology goes hand in hand with obscurantism in theology.

And thus the conclusion still presses upon us that the part now played by the Churches in the fostering and realising of social hope is in no reasonable or defensible proportion to the powers and prerogatives they claim. The sky is sombre. The clouds will not clear until there is a transmutation of temper and policy—a revival of the spirit of the primitive Church.

As I said at the outset, the reactionary attitude of the Churches in regard to social aspirations has its ominous parallel in their attitude to the intellectual life of the day. The great hope that has traversed our civilisation is stimulated by the faith that the universe is founded in reason, and that by a patient and honest following of truth, wherever it may appear, we shall attain to ever greater harmony in our attempts to see life steadily, and see it whole. There is an intellectual ideal as well as a social ideal; and if hope is to save, each must be held to be capable of realisation.

Again taking a general survey, we see the Churches holding aloof from, or discouraging, intellectual hope, no otherwise than they hold aloof from or discourage social hope. They have defined, with varying degrees of rigidity, their own doctrinal positions, and they are loath to leave the bounds prescribed. Here also a chasm begins to yawn. The results, if more subtle, are equally disastrous. Indeed the two sets of results are closely inter-

connected—they have important interactions—they accumulate in common. Conclusions arrived at in the sphere of thought and research slowly but surely permeate the minds of millions who have no facilities for study. And when the Churches lag behind, there comes into existence a diffused suspicion that Christianity has failed, because it dare not stand a cross-examination at the bar of knowledge. A reactionary policy may keep things going by appealing to emotion, and by carefully husbanding the momentum generated by prestige, tradition, and education. But the reckoning is bound to come. The free stream of thought may be partially dammed for a time; but sooner or later the waters, as they gather head, will burst the barriers and carry devastation to the lands they should have fertilised.

This is a theme which, on an occasion like this, I need not labour. For the Churchmen's Union has, as one of its avowed objects, the correction of this tendency to stereotype the past and to dread the developments with which the womb of the future is ever teeming. Nevertheless there is a point of view which is well worthy of mention here, inasmuch as it bears so directly on our warrant for indulging a hope that saves.

When we are tempted to be restive at the non-progressive character of so much of the intellectual life of the Churches, it is helpful to think out afresh the implications of the well-worn statement, that we are passing through a time of transition. Whatever philosophical value we may individually attach to the principle of a dialectical movement through Thesis and Antithesis to Synthesis, it at least receives remarkable illustration in the history of religious thought, on the large scale and on the small. According to this doctrine, a stage dominated by emotion will be followed by a stage dominated by criticism. Out of the blending of both arises a stage which enjoins the temporarily opposing claims in a higher unity, and gives to religion a more definite place in a fuller and richer whole.

It was thus that the Middle Ages, characterised mainly by unquestioning faith, were succeeded by the enlightenment, with its caustic and negative criticism of all spiritual world-views. We have entered on a period of synthesis. It was impressively initiated by Kant and Hegel, and by various schools of idealistic philosophy. Initiated—but not completed. We are carrying on their work. The transition is painful to many earnest Christians, and dangerous to many in whom the critical faculty is strongly developed. But the work has to be done, and success will be of supreme value to the religious future of humanity. The transition is a necessary condition of progress.

Our work, then, has to be done in an era of transitional reconstruction. We are called on to combine the claims of emotion and of reason in such a fundamental fashion that religion may take its place in a larger whole. The task is many-sided and of excessive delicacy. It is hard to keep the balance between issues that are so apt to clash. The Churches which are actually the most popular still throw their weight preponderatingly on the side of feeling. They rely little on science, little on criticism; even their ethics is not always in complete accordance with the dictates of an unbiassed conscience. But, nevertheless, they exert an undoubted influence within the limits of their respective communions. What is the secret of their power?

They satisfy certain deep elemental needs of the human heart. And those who assert the rights of reason and of criticism should realise that without this power there must be failure. The reproach that rests on rationalism in the harsher sense of that much misused term, finds in this failure its main justification. We have to show that a synthesis is possible which conserves but which also clarifies and expands.

On the other hand, the suspicion that reason and research are antagonistic to religion leads to a subversive dualism which undermines that faith in the ultimate righteousness of the universe on which hope must build. This fatal suspicion still lurks in many minds, and defers indefinitely the establishment of the fruitful synthesis for which the world is yearning. Full salvation can only be won through a whole-hearted conviction that essential Christianity, so far from being a hindrance to progress, is pre-eminently its source, foundation, and motive power. If we can fight through to this conviction we can possess our souls in patience, and can hold firmly on the road to reconciling reconstruction, undaunted by the confused clamour that is the natural, though distracting concomitant of the advance.

For one comfort in this regard, we know that what is demanded by the present has been accomplished in the past. The various sections of Christendom have actually and continuously adapted themselves to new or changing environments. From time to time they have modified their dogmatic systems and their discipline to meet the needs of differing nationalities, and of successive stages of civilisation. Some of them have cast off accretions of superstition and reformed their constitutions. Our own age is but asking that the Churches shall, with clearer consciousness and riper knowledge, adapt themselves to the new order. The splendid challenge rings out—Win the democracies for Christ! Will it be accepted?

“For a century or more men have fed upon an immense hope, the vanishing of which would be followed by a despair no less immense.”

But the hope cannot vanish! For faith in the ultimate righteousness of the universe is too deeply rooted in the hearts of the peoples. It lives on an abiding intuition which is the product of the interaction of the human spirit with the source of its being. The forms which it assumes are manifold: the tides of the spirit ebb and flow. But wherever the peoples reach out for clearer light and fuller life, there God is working: and where God thus works, hope springs eternal in the human breast. The hope cannot fail. But the Churches may fail in their relation to this hope, and so it may lose much of its brightness and its purity; its fulfilment may be grievously retarded.

Tremendous, therefore, is the responsibility of the Churches. For in them, despite their frequent lack of insight, their narrowness of outlook, is concentrated and guarded the flower of the spiritual experience of the race. And speedily would they wield a regenerating influence in the social and intellectual movements that surge around them, if they could but generously respond to the call of the future.

To be loyal to the past is a noble loyalty; to be loyal to the future is yet more noble. But for those who grasp the principle of continuity, the

antagonism is softened if not abolished. They see that what has been cannot ever simply persist. It furnishes the materials out of which, by a higher biology (call it dialectical, spiritual, or what you will) are built up ever more complex forms and ever loftier ideals.

Throughout God's universe reigns change, expansion, growth. And the true function of the Churches is, by prophetic insight and by reasoned doctrine, to anticipate and co-operate with the Divine purpose. Thus, and thus only, shall they be trusted leaders to the peoples who long for a progressive redemption which shall gladden the world that now is as well as find its consummation in a world that is to come.

We are passing through a perilous period in the unfolding drama of human history—a period big with possibilities for high enterprise and enlightened zeal. Well may we bow our knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, after Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, and pray that, individually and collectively, we may rise to the height of our Christian calling, and be endowed with power to prove worthy of it. So may it be possible for us, in this strangely altered world, to share the joy of the Apostle who, through an Iliad of woes, burst his triumphant way into a new order, and exultingly cried—"We were saved by hope."

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND ITS NONCONFORMIST MEMBERS.

By the Very Rev. ARNOLD PAGE, M.A., Dean of Peterborough.

"There are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord."—I Cor. xii. v.

The preface to our English Ordinal begins with the statement:—"It is evident unto all men diligently reading holy Scripture and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church: Bishops, Priests, and Deacons." I don't suppose that anybody now dealing with the subject independently for the first time would use exactly the same words. And if he used words which were at all like them, he would probably "hedge" more or less in several particulars, as *e.g.*, that we cannot certainly know whether the offices named were really identical with those which are so named still, or bore an equivalent relation to one another. He might go further and say that we *do* know that they were *not* identical and were differently linked together.

But I am not going to quarrel with the statement. If the system we have inherited works well or admits of being worked well, as I think it does, it seems to me to be, apart from its antiquarian interest, a mere foolish logomachy, perhaps a "genealogy," most unprofitable and vain, to bother one's head whether it is as old as the hills or as new as the manna gathered in the morning. I am perfectly willing to believe that in the providence of God it has come to be that which it is, for us to make the best of it in setting forth His glory, and in setting forward the salvation of all men.

But what I want to point out is this curious circumstance. Appeal is made to *holy Scripture*, diligent reading of which is said to make evident, at least when ancient authors are consulted too, what ministries there were at first in Christ's Church. And so we naturally turn to the scripture passages which find a place in our Ordination formularies, as being likely at all events to throw some light upon the matter in hand. They *do* throw a little. There are two short extracts which have to do with men who are called "Deacons." Only, one of them relates to a time when the government of the Church was still in the hands of the Apostles, and "deacons" were appointed to help them in what we should regard as a mainly business job. There is another short extract in which a "Bishop" is spoken of, but there is nothing in it which is not equally consistent with a wide variety of view as to what his office was, while the context seems to suggest that no *priest*, if priest was not the same, but only *deacons* were associated with him. The alternative Consecration epistle appears to point, not to an episcopal, but to a purely presbyterian (in the later senses of the words) local Church system. In the Ordering of *priests* there is but one epistle, and most remarkably here of all it *does* describe and detail what the other scripture passages do not,—something that sounds like a complete gradation of ministry; and there of course we expect to run to earth at last our threefold series of deacon, priest, and bishop. They are not there! Instead we have a *fivefold* series—some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors and Teachers.

And forthwith we proceed—or we are held suspect, if we do not proceed—to *unchurch* those of our fellow believers in Christ the Lord, who now, wherever originally responsibility might lie, by no deliberate act of theirs, but by mere hereditary accident it may be, have not *all* or have not *any* of the *three*, in name at least; although obviously with equal or with greater reason they might unchurch *us*, as sometimes their predecessors did, because we offer no regulated and distinctive place to the other five. Of course, I would not be taken to admit that we have not had them:—Apostles commissioned manifestly from on high, of whom some we "sent out" not as ambassadors, but as exiles rather, from their spiritual home; prophets we have so often stoned and occasionally have built their sepulchres; evangelists who have not been ashamed to be reproached as "enthusiasts" of the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God; pastors who, amid the wilderness of lonesome poverty and official neglect, have been the faithful shepherds of their flocks; and teachers who have rightly divided the word of truth, and dug out and minted into current coin the inexhaustible ore of the riches of Christ.

But of these we do *not* claim—thank God, we have seldom claimed—any monopoly. If we should, millions of healed souls and regenerated lives would give us the lie, where never any bishops, priests, and deacons of ours, but, it may be, ministers, elders, and overseers, have come at all. Only, there waits at the next corner the inevitable spectral shadow, ready to spring out upon us with all the awful paraphernalia of stage mystery. I will not stop to suggest that "God is able" of any stones to raise up a full apostolic succession to Peter and Paul and James. The *thing* appeals to me. Whether as sentiment or else as sober fact—and I do not see why it

should not be sober fact—it does seem to me to be an inspiring and a fruitful thought, that from the beginning those who received passed on in turn the warrant of commission which came at first from the very Lord. I cannot appraise the loss. But I do account it a loss, not only for themselves, that anywhere and for any the series should have been broken which betokened once the common spiritual descent of all who called upon His name. For be it well remembered, that the laying on of hands was not for ministers only. They were the channel through whom, in a figure, was conveyed to all the baptized the gift of the Holy Ghost.

But there it is. And meanwhile, by nobody's fault who is now alive, Christians are divided, I will not say into hostile camps—the hostility is subsiding—but into independent companies, regiments or army corps, flying all of them the one flag and occupied, each on its own, in desultory excursions and alarms round and about the central powers of evil who fight on interior lines. We have got in fact into a tangled muddle of cross purposes, individually praiseworthy perhaps in themselves, but nullifying one another. We insist, as we have a perfect right to insist, that *our* ministers shall possess certain qualifications, which some regard as essential to the ministries which *they* fulfil. Others as legitimately insist, that *their* ministries confirmed by signs following shall not be invalidated or impugned. And neither they nor we seem able to recognise, on the one hand that *their* ministers are not ours nor ours theirs, any more than the officers of one regiment or army corps can at the same time be the officers of another; or on the other hand that in “the whole congregation of Christian people dispersed throughout the whole world” there is room for, and there *were* from the beginning, *many ministries*, as our own Ordering of priests is careful to remind us. In 1603, to which that great and truly Catholic phrase belongs, there was no *Church of England* “dispersed throughout the whole world;” and even if immediately after it there was no recognition by name of a non-episcopal Church, it would be too childish to suppose that those who formulated or adopted it, meant not only to *include* within its purview, as I hope they did, the unreformed Church with which they were at feud, but also to *exclude* the protestant or the reformed Churches in which an episcopal system of government and transmission of ministerial function had been discarded or had lapsed.

Anyhow the disastrous result is the same. “The whole congregation,” or *all* the congregations, “of Christian people” do not and cannot pull their weight, or the half or a tithe of their weight, either in the politics to which they belong, or as this world catastrophe has demonstrated, in God's family of mankind. United they would be all powerful. Disunited, just when the need is greatest, they scarcely count.

And the desperate fatuity of the position is emphasized by the fact that many of the primary causes of disunion have dropped largely into oblivion or disuse, and repose neglected amid the lumber of dry-as-dust controversy. In the Church of England, *e.g.*, we have drifted practically into congregational independency, or perhaps, rather, into ministerial irresponsibility. The uniformity on which we so much insisted has been knocked into a cocked hat, battered beyond repair, chiefly by those (*solvuntur visu tabulæ*) who attach

most importance to external forms. We can see now, *most of us can see*, that a place might have been found, and precious service reserved for all those who went, or were driven, out because a rigid conformity of method was, or seemed to them to be, incompatible with the free play sometimes of genius or of zeal. And even in points of doctrine, it may be said, may it not? that our Church shelters within it now an ampler latitude of opinion and expression than would have been tolerated three hundred years ago by all or by any of the self-contained units into which the national Christianity was beginning to break up. Nobody would ever have dreamed of objecting to "bishops" as merely *bishops*. It was the *prelate* who provoked distrust. And prelates, very nearly, are bugbears of the past.

But why pursue the subject? What matters is to find a remedy. I have no faith myself in make-believe expedients. I do not think that anybody would be benefited by my abandoning means of grace and channels of approach to God which are habitual and helpful to me, for alternatives preferred by others and, may be, better or as good, in which I should not feel at home. Wholesome foods which separately might commend themselves to some or many palates, if jumbled in a common stockpot would please none. Under reverent and seemly conditions, which ordinarily, I suppose, would include an official ministry, I should be willing to administer the Holy Communion *to*, or receive it *from*, or share it *with*, any one who confessed that Jesus Christ was Lord. It would be as great a tyranny to attempt to impose intercommunion on those who did not approve it, as to restrict my liberty. Liberty is worth very little, if it points only in one direction, and means *my* liberty and not *yours*.

We shall not get much further forward on those lines, because they represent no principle, but rest, ultimately, on individual will and choice. But we might get further forward if we could bring ourselves to admit that, as Scripture and experience tell us, there have been and are *many* ministries in Christ's Church—some old, some later, some new, some perhaps extinct, though they might be revived. General, Adjutant, Captain sound new-fangled; so to many do prophetess and deaconess, though they are as old as Paul. It is not essential that any of us should use them all, but we may *honour* them all wherever the manifest marks of God's blessing rest on their labours. It is well to give range and scope even to eccentrics and extremists, in order that their failures may be their own, and to pioneers in order that their successes may be partly ours, and lest either sort should become embittered and estranged.

It is a trite instance that the friars might have become the sectaries of 600 years ago, if they had not been employed as the skirmishers of the Church. With strange inconsequence, those who called themselves "reformed," taking the precious particles of reformation which they had so hardly won, and making a sort of idol of them, bounded out the spirit of self-development which was their reason of being. Henceforward they had a *terminus a quo*, but no *terminus ad quem*. The sorrow is, that once fields have been delimited and hedges grown up, the common pasture is no longer free. Divisions become stereotyped, conventional, taken for granted—but they divide. The one flock of the one Shepherd, pinfolded off into separate compartments, cannot be "all together in one place," where the voice that they know may speak individually to each, and rally and lead them all.

That is the situation with which we have to deal. We shall do no good by ignoring it or by pretending that it is other than it is. The crux of the whole question is the recognition of Christian ministry in those who are not ministers according to the pattern which, perhaps with excellent authority,

we accept and require for our own. If it cannot be faced, the question is insoluble. Souls will be saved, "some on boards and some on broken pieces of the ship," but the Church will be impotent in its whole mass. I do not believe that there are many even among the most rigid, who in their hearts deny or doubt that the grace of God can and does flow through ministerial channels as multifarious as all the sects. Once *that* is conceded, we have a basis of common speech and responsible mouthpieces of intercommunication. Where it is unforced, something may be gained from association in worship. I do not think it will carry us far. I wish it were not so, but it is likely to be infrequent, and therefore an occasion for fulsome religiosity—the "party manners" of self-conscious religion. I should rely more upon the understanding which would come with mutual respect. With or without acknowledgment, in ritual and in doctrine, the Churches are borrowing more and more from one another. And the laity, even the devout laity, is becoming to a great extent, except in name, undenominational. Its Christianity is not always, thank God, on the surface of things. Let us never forget that uniformity is not the only unity, nor unity best expressed in uniformity. It is not for unity of form, but for "the unity of the faith," that *every ministry* has been given to the Church as a body that has many members under one Head. The scales some day will fall from our eyes, and we shall see that together we *have* been all the while the one flock of the one Shepherd.

THE CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT.

By Rev. G. H. RENDALL, B.D., Litt.D., D.C.L.; sometime Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge; Principal of Liverpool University; Head Master of Charterhouse.

"Diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."—*Eph. iv. 3.*

For these days of quiet retreat we have walked as friends together, exchanged thoughts, received counsel and correction, searched out the verities on which our ties of Christian fellowship depend.

In this quiet evening close you would wish me, I think, to touch the common chord in which our thoughts can find unison. We may have been engaged in shattering some idols, but the last fruit you would wish from this Conference is mere increase of iconoclastic zeal.

Have you ever read that noble self-review, in which, towards the close of his storm-tost career, Richard Baxter compares the outlook of spiritual youth? Few souls have ever felt more urgently, or more sensitively obeyed, the goading instinct of self-scrutiny; to him in very truth "the unexamined life was not worth living." Few have been able to dissect and balance more nicely the inter-play of spiritual motives, aims, and promptings: few to expound them with more spontaneous and delicate expression. He was born into an era of sects and schisms; never have storms more wild and gusty raged around and within the English Church: and he stood at the very centre of the disturbance. A puritan clergyman under the regimen of Laud; a chaplain to the troops of Cromwell, arraigning the licence of sectaries; at the Restoration, driven to choose between the office of a bishop or the disabilities of a nonconformist, he espoused the lot of obloquy and of distrust, and bore meekly his martyrdom of pains, forfeits, and cruel bodily privations. And from the midst of them he writes:—

"In my younger studies, I was apt to start up controversies . . . and more desirous to acquaint the world with all that I took to be the truth, and to assault those books by name which I thought did tend to deceive them, and did contain unsound and dangerous doctrines. . . . I did not sufficiently discern how much in most of our controversies is verbal, and rests upon mutual mistakes. . . . I have perceived that nothing so much hindereth the reception of the truth, as urging it on men with too harsh importunity, and falling too heavily on their errors: for hereby you engage their honour in the business, and they defend their errors as themselves, and stir up all their wit and ability to oppose you. Men are so loth *to be drenched with truth*, that I am no more for that way to work. . . . In the spring trees shoot up into branches, leaves, and blossoms; but in the autumn *the life draws down into the root*." Let us not too much drench, or be drenched, with truth.

"The life draws down into the root." In what does it consist? Hear Baxter once again. The balm of controversy is in—

"the witness of the indwelling Spirit: for I more sensibly perceive that the Spirit is the great witness of Christ and Christianity to the world. . . . 'And if any man have not the spirit of Christ, the same is none of his.'"

The Church—the Spirit-bearer (πνευματοφόρος)—is the organ of the Spirit. That is the basis of our belief in one Catholic and Apostolic Church: the article follows as a corollary from belief in the Holy Ghost. It is not a solvent of all differences, but it is the assurance of an eventual goal, a reconciliation of divergences. Belief in the one animating Spirit does not impose a single way. For we ask at once—Through what channels does He act, what are the true criteria and credentials? But it does assure us that eventual unity of answer will be attained.

Upon the *Institutional* side, experience warns us not to be hasty or dogmatic. The whole course of revelation—the selection of the chosen people, the covenant with Israel, the law as the schoolmaster to Christ, the sacrificial and the priestly system, the secular fortunes of the race—Egypt, the wilderness, the schism of the tribes, the Babylonish exile, the saving of the remnant, the Syrian and Roman servitude, the era of Scribe and Pharisee—are a succession of surprises, fit to culminate in the supreme paradox of all, the Incarnation of the Word of God in Jesus of Nazareth—and the sealing of the new covenant in His blood poured out upon the Cross. In presence of such data, we may indeed be clear that the Spirit does choose and use for His organs elect prophetic souls—seer, saint, or mystic—furnished above their fellows with the gift of vision, to discern "the mystery ordained before the world," "hid from ages and generations, and now made manifest unto the saints," "revealed unto them by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God": but this does not conflict with intimations that the Holy Spirit can use likewise for His vehicle some consecrated order of chosen and commissioned priests, singled out and set apart by the suffrages of their fellow-believers, channels of grace for the reception and disclosure of God's purposes to man. An episcopal hierarchy, Councils—provincial or œcumenical, even a single representative head and mouthpiece of the whole Church visible and militant, all are *conceivable* modes of the communication of God's will.

We need not be too summary in our rejections; each experiment will find its valuation in the Divine economy, as an instrument for apprehending and expressing God.

Credally, the same holds good. Certainly there is "a deposit of truth"—for Christianity, alike in parentage and in inception, is a historic religion, its roots laid deep in the monotheism of Israel, in Jehovah—holy, just, and merciful, and its sap-yielding stem in the enacted life, the manifested word and work, of the Incarnate Son of God. On this material the Holy Spirit ever draws, mediating for man a vital *rapproch* with the transcendent Father and the Incarnate Son. Through Him we "have access to the Father," boldness and candour of approach: so that we finite men can know Him as He is: and, as we can receive it, He also according to the promise unfolds, imparts to us the personality of the Son—the only-begotten. The primary "deposit," the nascent realization of Jesus Christ, what he was, and what he meant, was to the first disciples meagre and imperfect almost beyond belief. "Out of his body shall flow rivers of living water," Jesus once said, and His disciples could not understand, their eyes were holden. S. John himself, one of them, bears the testimony. "Thus spake Jesus of the Spirit, which they that believe on him were one day to receive. For the *Holy Ghost was not as yet*." There came the promised counsellor, the Paraclete, and straightway the "deposit" grows, expands, transforms; expresses itself in new formulas, emerging out of new experiences; St. Paul transcends St. Peter or St. James in his sense of mystic union between the believer and Christ; St. John in turn transcends St. Paul in his thoughts of sacramental participation in the life of Jesus, of reconciliation and atonement, found not only in appropriation of the benefits of his death, but yet more in vital assimilation of his very self, in eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood. So down the ages, in categories of thought, and phase, and act appropriate to the mental and the social conditions then attained, and therefore of course partial, imperfect, and sometimes transient in its terms, the Christian consciousness and Christian creed enlarges its content. At times we see them thwarted and hindered, and turned awry.

"Sands begin

To hem his watery march, and dam his stream
And split his currents; that for many a league
The shorn and parcell'd Oxus strains along
Through beds of sand and matted rushy isles,
Oxus forgetting the bright speed he had
In his high mountain-cradle in Pamere
A foil'd circuitous wanderer."

But none the less, believing in the impulse, the gravitation, the unity of the one impelling Spirit, we are persuaded that each diverted current is making oceanwards, and

"That even the weariest river
Winds somewhere safe to sea."

Still more, and above all, for the realization of *Christian Fellowship*, the belief in the one Spirit enlarges our horizon and sustains our hope. It rids us of the pettier prejudices of time and place, of stock and of surrounding, of insularity in training, and assumptions, and deportment. And the more that we can vitally believe that the unity of the Spirit is one with the Father and the Son, that His action is not only coextensive with the Christian consciousness, but likewise with the secular, the creative, and the cosmic whole, the wider grows the compass of our reassurance. For in that case the movement of the secular order must share the harmonies of the religious: the one Spirit is continually adjusting the resources of revelation to the progress and the education of the race,

In a striking treatise, entitled *Nationalism and Internationalism*, one of our younger historians has lately traced the clue of European history in the development of nationalities. The march of civilisation has been the evolution of larger and more conscious corporate wholes. Through the whole fabric of society, in all its parts and functions, that is visibly true. And the highest working unit reached has been the nation, not yet the race. They are the higher units of the organic whole. But above them, and comprehending them, is the larger whole of Internationality. To that they are contributory parts, framed together for the solidarity of man. Before us may lie some yet more interpenetrative unity. But for the present at least the unity of man is built out of the brotherhood of nations, each according to each, each conserving and consecrating for each, the rights of equal brotherhood. Not by suppression, nor by renunciation of nationhood, but by its most ungrudging recognition does the world-unity come within reach. Such is the meaning of the stupendous struggle in which we now stand locked, before the judgment-seat of God—nations martyred, nations "cast down but not destroyed," nations erect and militant.

Under the guidance of one self-same Spirit, may we not in the religious order look for adjustments parallel to those which we perceive in the political and secular? Nations have been welded together from common unities of stock, of language, of location and environment, above all from a common fund of sympathies, ideals, beliefs, and sufferings, shared in some remembered past. That constitutes their right of unity—inviolable. So too the several Churches, through unities of language, race, environment, beliefs, experiences, trials, have been compacted into the working units of the Christian organism. Each, so far as our vision can yet go, has rights inviolable. The unity of Christendom is organic in the brotherhood of Churches. Surely it is no accident, but an ordering of Providence, that the Churches of every type, Eastern and Western, Catholic and Protestant, Armenian, Uniat or Greek, Episcopal or Presbyterian or Congregational, are comrades in a common cause, for the hastening of the coming of the kingdom. This is God's new invitation to reunion. When, the conflict ended, at St. Paul's and Notre Dame, at St. Peter's and Santa Sophia, in Moscow, Athens and New York, we solemnise our Eucharists of praise, shall we from the holy rites, from communion of the body and communion of the blood, exclude the representatives of confederate churches, separated from us by individual differences of formulary, ritual or church discipline? Rather, without their presence and participation, will not the sacrament of fellowship be incomplete? By strange perversions the feast of Christian unity and brotherhood has been transformed into a test of estrangement and bar of severance, and its very validity held to depend on the maintenance of such exclusions. It must become instead the central seal of common brotherhood. There are many signs of hope. Here is the final conclusion of one who writes as a strong Churchman:—

"If any are unwilling to communicate with each other when they draw nigh to Jesus, the most fundamental principle of Christian love is violated. The love and confidence expressed can have no limits except the limits of the Christian society itself. Any exclusions—other than that imposed by the conditions of time and space—defeat Christ's purpose, and meet his disapproval."¹

The validity of Sacraments rests not on accidents of antecedent, ministration, or mode of celebration, but on their fulfilment of the meaning and the measure of Christ's ordinance of love, on their apprehension of the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

¹ Hamilton, *People of God*, ii. 199.